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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE KINGS OF ENGLAND.

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ETHELWULF, ETHELBALD, ETHELBERT, ETHELRED I., ALFRED.
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WITH the exception of Alfred, the reigns of these kings form so uninteresting a period in English history, were characterised by such weakness, with so few redeeming features to render them worthy of notice, that we shall devote but little space to their consideration. A more congenial occupation will it be to glance at the life of Alfred; the admirable nature of whose administration, unsullied by a single act of cruelty or injustice, and distinguished by the introduction of, and fostering care exercised over, those measures which conduce to the public weal, will ever constitute a remarkable era in British annals. But we must first allude to his immediate predecessors.

Ethelwulf, the son of Egbert, ascended the throne of Wessex in the year 838. His first important act was bestowing the sovereignty of Kent, which included Essex, Surrey, and Sussex, upon his eldest son, Athelstan, whose military qualities in a measure supplied the want of those in the person of his father. The Danish engagements continued with little interruption during the whole of this reign. The kingdoms of Northumberland and Mercia still remained under the sway of separate monarchs; but the former, disorganised by regal competitors, was in no respect fitted to withstand the Danish attacks. The Welsh, too, again exhibited an unwillingness to submit to the Saxon authority. Burhred, however, the Mercian king, to whom they were tributary, aided by Ethelwulf, soon quelled their formidable opposition. But it was from the Danes that the country received the most injury. No less than eleven regular battles were fought, independently of the skirmishes that arose from their attempts to land on protected parts of the coast. Victory generally attended the English arms. They were also defeated by Athelstan, near Sandwich, in a naval engagement, the first of which we have any record. Their numbers were so great, their invasions so frequent, that the repulses they experienced seemed rather to increase than to diminish their incursions and ravages. It is painful to read of the cities and edifices they destroyed, the cruelty they perpetrated, and the universal terror excited by their presence. But these evils would have been far greater had not Ethelwulf possessed in his counsellors, St. Swithun, Bishop of Winchester, and Ealstan, Bishop of Sherborne, persons who by their advice and their money, aided in repelling the ruthless Northmen. They were, in fact, the king's executive. The former, although he fostered Ethelwulf's predilection to religious exercises, admonished him repeatedly to correct his supineness, and to act with a vigour becoming the exigencies of the kingdom; while the latter, knowing that piety would not render the country prosperous,

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or deliver it from the Danes, incited him to head his troops on the battle field, and conquer the enemy. Well was it that he enjoyed the advantage of such able advisers, and, notwithstanding the sacred office which they sustained, we believe that their procedure in thus departing from the limits of ecclesiastical jurisdiction is fully justifiable on the plea, that by endeavouring to protect the kingdom from foreign foes they were promoting the interests and securing the continuance of their religion.

But we have now to refer to Ethelwulf's long-cherished and important design, that of making a pilgrimage to Rome. Neither the magnitude of the undertaking, the length of the journey, nor the unsettled state of his dominions, cooled his ardour, or weakened his resolve. All difficulties seemed to vanish in the wish to satisfy his religious enthusiasm. He left in 855, remained with Pope Leo IV. about a year, repaired the Saxon school founded by Ina (king of Wessex), in 727, which some time previously had been destroyed by fire; visited the churches, chapels, and sacred relics, bestowed large gifts upon the Holy See, and in short omitted nothing which might feed the flame of devotion. He returned through France, where, though his wife Osburga was then alive, he married Judith, a princess only twelve years of age, the daughter of Charles, the French monarch. His motive in forming this alliance was probably to extend his influence, and to consolidate the interests of the two countries; but, notwithstanding these suppositional reasons, it was both impolitic and unnecessary.

During his absence, Athelstan had died, and Ethelbald, his next son, partly at the instigation of Ealstan, sought to usurp the throne of Wessex. The people, disapproving of Ethelwulf's marriage, and fearing that his religious zeal might lead him to neglect his kingdom, rallied round Ethelbald's standard. Anxious to avert the calamity of a civil war, the former submitted to his son's demands, and signed a treaty in the year 856, by which he relinquished Wessex to Ethelbald, and contented himself with the less powerful kingdom of Kent. Could the illustrious Egbert have lifted the veil of futurity, and perceived the state to which England had been reduced by the administration of Ethelwulf, how deep would have been his regret that the structure, in the formation of which he had spent his whole life, should have been almost annihilated by the apathy, the incompetency, and the misgovernment of his son.

The last two years of Ethelwulf's life were devoted to acts of charity and religion, but these exercises, though admirable when subservient to the necessary duties devolving upon a monarch, in his case unduly encroached upon the time and attention requisite to the preservation of his dominions. He died in 858, after a reign of twenty years and five months, and was buried at Winchester. Contrary to the Saxon custom, he bequeathed the kingdoms of Wessex and Kent to Ethelbald and Ethelbert, and on their decease to his younger sons Ethelred and Alfred.

Such is an epitome of Ethelwulf's reign. Indolent in disposition, dangerously addicted to a monastic life, deficient in nearly all those qualities which produce an able warrior or a wise sovereign, he allowed the country which his father had raised to a position of power previously unknown to become the scene of internal disputes, to be torn into factions by the rival Northumbrian princes, and only saved from the horrors of a civil war by surrendering part of his dominions to the restless, ambitious Ethelbald. Instead of energetically following up the victories which he obtained over the Danes, and fortifying the island so as to resist their oft-repeated attacks, he resigned himself to the charms of priestly companionship, to the inspection of holy relics in Rome, to the enriching of monasteries, and the bestowing of gifts upon the sovereign Pontiff. In comparison with Egbert, we see how far superior the character of the father was to that of the son; but in comparison with Ethelbald, Ethelbert, and Ethelred, even the reign of Ethelwulf, is worthy of admiration. It was Alfred who restored the glory which had vanished with the accession of these four degenerate monarchs.

Ethelbald, already king of Wessex, retained the throne in virtue of his father's will. Licentious in character, endowed with little mental power, influenced by no desire to improve his dominions, his inglorious reign was happily short. In opposition to the ecclesiastical laws, he married his step-mother, Judith, but the entreaties of St. Swithun induced him to dissolve the connection, and the princess returned to her native land, where she formed an alliance with Baldwin, Count of Flanders; from whom sprang Matilda, subsequently the queen of William the Conqueror. Ethelbald died in the year 860, and was interred in Sherborne Cathedral. Some historians allege that his removal was much regretted; but the sympathy manifested appears to have proceeded principally from the clergy, who having derived considerable benefit from the change he introduced in the payment of their tithes, would naturally feel somewhat grieved at the event. Such a circumstance, therefore, cannot be adduced in proof of his popularity; in fact, we see no reason to believe that his demise was an occurrence in which the people evinced much regret.

Ethelbert, who had previously reigned over Kent, now succeeded to the crown of Wessex, and united the government of the two kingdoms. The Danes again infested the island, and committed their usual depredations. On one occasion Ethelbert bribed them to leave the country, but though he observed good faith, they violated the treaty, and immediately afterwards ravaged the greater part of Kent. This circumstance, however, led the monarch to alter his pacific policy; he re-organised the army, which had fallen into neglect during the tranquil sway of Ethelbald, and resolved resolutely to oppose such treacherous foes. The Danes, perceiving these warlike preparations, thought it prudent to defer their invasions. Ethelbert died in 867, after a reign of about six years. His body rests by the side of his brother's in Sherborne Cathedral.

The next prince who occupied the throne of Wessex and Kent was Ethelred I. His administration was altogether better than that of his late predecessors. Vigorous and courageous in war, he fought in one year nine pitched battles with the Danes, besides several attacks, in both of which he was generally victorious. But notwithstanding his military activity, the Northmen seemed determined to settle permanently on the English soil; a design that was in no slight degree favoured by the dissension existing in East Anglia, Mercia, and particularly in Northumberland, over which the Saxon monarchs now possessed little authority. In the latter kingdom, discord and anarchy were predominant; the sovereignty was claimed by two nobles, one of whom resolved, by recourse to the Danes, to decide the contest. This fatal step paved the way to their temporary supremacy in Britain. As might naturally be anticipated, they acceded to the wishes of the Northumbrian rival; and having landed in East Anglia, from whence they procured horses, they penetrated into, and subdued the whole of Northumberland. The advantage that this victory conferred upon them, stimulated Ivar, their general, to extend his invasions; as the result of which, East Anglia and Mercia were obliged to submit to the conquerors. At the same time, the Danish leader, conscious that Wessex formed the key to the dominions of England, by obtaining which the whole island would fall within his power, decided upon attacking that kingdom. A memorable battle ensued at Aston, in Berkshire, in the year 871, where the Danish troops commanded by kings and generals of renown, suffered a total defeat from the West Saxon sovereign and his intrepid brother, the youthful Alfred. The favourable issue of this engagement is represented to have been owing in no slight degree to Ethelred's religious valour; for at the moment when his soldiers, led on by Alfred, were despairing of victory, the king (having been previously occupied in devotional exercises) unexpectedly appeared among his army, inspired them with hope, and distinguished with the sign of the cross, dashed so resolutely into the Danish forces, that the enemy surprised at his bravery, and the sacred nature of his mission, precipitately fled, leaving a large number of their comrades slain on the battle-field. Another encounter,

however, shortly afterwards took place, in which Ethelred received a wound that produced his death, A.D. 872, having worn the crown for five years. He was buried in Wimborne monastery, Dorset.

We have refrained from relating all the Danish engagements which occurred in this reign, partly on account of their number, and partly because it would be but repeating an oft-told tale of barbarity, of the destruction of monasteries and edifices of ancient and beautiful architecture, of treasures plundered, of the spoilage of libraries, of monks tortured, and abbots killed at the altar. Foremost in these scenes of devastation and cruelty were the Danish nobles; yet from the same race arose in subsequent ages, the warriors, the statesmen, the philosophers, and the writers, whose victories, political actions, scientific labours, and literary performances, have conferred on them a universal celebrity.

But we now enter upon a most eventful section of English history, the life of Alfred. Although the principal circumstances must already be familiar to our readers, yet the subject cannot be so completely exhausted as to leave no incidents touching such a singular career by re-perusing which we shall not derive amusement and instruction. The love that he ever manifested for his people, the intellectual power, the fortitude, the well-regulated ambition, the extensive military knowledge, and the correct idea of justice, of which he was the favoured possessor, were all devoted to the reformation of his kingdom; and when we look at its condition at the commencement and close of his reign, we perceive the magnitude of the obstacles which he surmounted, and the happy results which followed the application of his legislative wisdom.

In the history of every country there have been periods from which a new era and a different order of things date their existence. In the reigns of Egbert, Alfred, Henry VIII., Elizabeth, Cromwell, and Anne, great and important changes occurred. Egbert modified the Anglo-Saxon form of Government; Alfred, while he introduced still further improvements into this system, implanted in his subjects a desire for learning, and effectually accelerated the march of civilisation; Henry VIII. unconsciously aided the Reformation, by which the fetters were broken that had bound England as well as Europe in superstition and ignorance for centuries; Elizabeth, by the talents of her ministry, the wisdom of her policy, raised her country to a position of eminence and power to which it had never previously attained; and lastly, the era of Queen Anne was distinguished as the Augustan age of literature, a period in which flourished Newton, Addison, Saunderson, Young, Halley, Somers, Wren, Pope, and Thomson, besides a long list of literary and scientific persons of lesser note. The fame of Shakespeare and Milton, the splendour of Elizabeth's administration, cannot eclipse the blaze of intellectual light which illumined the commencement of the 18th century, or surpass the vigorous, well-directed government of the beloved and humane Queen Anne.

But to return to our narrative. Alfred, the last son of Ethelwulf, was born at Wantage in the year 849. At the age of five he was sent to Rome to receive the Pope's unction, and in 855 accompanied his father on his pilgrimage to that city. Across the stormy ocean, over the ice-bound Alps, through the dominions of foreign potentates, the infant prince passes safely; Leo IV. blesses the future king; he returns home through France, and after his arrival bears off the prize which Osburga, his mother, promises to give to whichever of her sons should first learn to read a volume of Saxon ballad poetry, that had excited the eager curiosity of Alfred. From the day on which he achieved this mental victory, literature became a favourite pursuit; but a long succession of circumstances intervened to retard his progress in the acquisition of knowledge. At the age of twenty he married Elswitha, a branch of the Mercian royal family, and in 872 ascended the throne of Wessex. The state of the country was truly deplorable. The Danes had grown more determined by their late successes, so that eight battles occurred in about twelve months; but at last, becoming tired of such repeated conflicts, a treaty of peace was concluded, which, however, the invaders violated, and thus caused renewed outbreaks.

To oppose their attacks Alfred built large vessels, manned them with experienced mariners, and then encountered the Danes both on sea and on land. His efforts were crowned with success; the enemy, repeatedly defeated, engaged to suspend hostilities, and gave hostages as an earnest of their willingness. But the northern tribes, ever true to their character, the following year (877) again appeared with strong reinforcements; their presence struck gloom into the hearts of the English, so that the latter offered but feeble opposition. Besides having overrun the island, they settled in Wessex; the inhabitants had lost nearly all wish to exterminate them; and Alfred, almost deserted, his hope of immediate victory dissipated, his power gone, found himself a wanderer in the land which he had been appointed to protect. The gloomy prospect, however, did not dishearten him; for, adapting himself to his circumstances, he dismissed his servants, relinquished the insignia of royalty, and sought refuge in a herdsman's cottage. The incident is no doubt familiar to our readers, of the noble-minded prince (his dignity then unknown) having been ordered by his hostess to bake some cakes which were lying on the hearth, but the fugitive Alfred, engaged in making bows and arrows, neglected his instructions, and thus incurred the anger of his entertainer, who reminded him that he willingly eat the cakes, though he did nothing towards supplying them. The importance of this tradition has probably been much magnified by the monks, still it possesses great interest as indicating the troubles and vicissitudes experienced during the early part of his reign. The herdsman's cottage however, was not long tenanted by such a distinguished person; for attended by his family, and a few faithful followers, he selected as his retreat a marshy locality near Taunton. Here, in the year 878, he built a fortress, the situation of which rendered it almost impregnable, while it afforded him an opportunity of frequently harassing the Danes, and returning to his place of refuge with great ease. The spot long afterwards bore the name of Athelney, or the Isle of Nobles. But in the mean time the Earl of Devon had conquered a division of the enemy, slain Hubba, their general, and obtained possession of the celebrated Danish standard "The Raven," the loss of which is represented to have been in no slight degree the cause of their defeat. The Northmen attached great virtue to this standard; but of course we must ascribe its supposed efficacy to the delusion under which they laboured; for when their imagination led them to believe that the bird clapped his wings, then victory ensued—if he drooped his head, the reverse would be their lot.

Though Alfred was not engaged in the late battle, he soon heard of the success, collected his adherents—who, thinking he had been long dead, received him with enthusiasm—and enjoined them to be in readiness to march against their assailants at a moment's notice. It was after this occurrence that he adopted the hazardous expedient of visiting the Danish camp, in order to ascertain its position, the number of troops, and the opposition which it would be likely they might array against the English. Habited in a minstrel's dress, he entered the enemy's territory, remained there several days, procured the requisite information, and then returned to his retreat at Athelney. He apprised his followers of the indolence and insecurity of the Danish camp—reanimated them with hope, and appointed Selwood Forest, in Somersetshire, as the head-quarters. From this point his army marched to Eddington, where they encountered and routed the Danes, A.D. 880. The latter fought with great courage, but never suspected that Alfred would appear at the head of so brave and numerous a body of soldiers, or that their recently-acquired dominions would so soon be wrested from them.

The King, now in a position to dictate terms to the conquered, compelled all the Danes who refused to embrace Christianity instantly to leave the country; and in order to induce those who remained to abandon a rover's life for the cultivation of the peaceful arts, he granted them East Anglia and Northumberland, and invested Guthrum (their commander since the death of Hubba), with the title of monarch, on condition of the latter being his vassal. The

Danes accepted and abided by these terms. Such was the nature of the treaty thus concluded; the mildness, humanity, and wisdom of which reflect great credit upon Alfred. Would that the Northmen had shown their gratitude by promoting the welfare of their adopted country. Long years of anarchy and disquietude elapsed ere the British, Saxon, and Danish races lost their nationality in their efforts for the public and social improvement of the whole.

The interval of peace that now followed was employed in fortifying the coasts, and rendering the army more efficient. In 884, however, the Danes landed in Kent, but owing to the vigilance of Alfred and his soldiers, the invaders were repulsed before any serious depredation had been committed, and the plunder which they had just obtained from France, consisting chiefly of a large number of horses, fell into the hands of the English. Yet, notwithstanding the posture of defence that the island presented, in 893, after a rather protracted period of tranquillity, the Danes disembarked in strong force on the same coast as before—entrenched themselves near Milton, in Kent, from whence they carried their ravages over the neighbouring districts. But Alfred hastened with his troops to the protection of his people, and in spite of their attacks on several parts of the coast almost simultaneously, and the death of Guthrum, which prompted the East Anglian Danes to revolt, and deliver themselves from the English sway, he reduced them to submission, captured the family of Hastings, their chief—whom, however, he generously restored, provided he left the country; and defeated by the superior form of his vessels the piratical Northmen that infested the coasts. In one of these naval battles he destroyed twenty of their ships, tried the prisoners, and hung them for piracy; an act of well-timed severity that conducted very materially to the re-establishment of peace. The English vessels used at this period were very long, and propelled by about forty oars (sometimes more)—with nine of these the victory was gained to which reference has just been made.

The Danes, after this signal defeat, left the kingdom unmolested; those inhabiting East Anglia and Northumberland tendered anew their allegiance to Alfred; the Welsh, for a long time a refractory people, likewise submitted to his authority; while his own subjects, attached to him because of his regard for them, and the tranquil state to which he had brought his dominions, seconded his exertions in the cause of reform.

But we must now advert more especially to his private life, literary attainments, and the nature of his administration; and truly there are few themes on which we could dilate with greater pleasure. Endowed with intellectual talents of a high order, possessed of unceasing activity and industry, actuated by a noble and virtuous motive to stem the tide of ignorance and to waft into his country the breath of civilisation, he not only shone in the senate and on the battle-field, but added to the glory with which mankind has encircled his name, by his charitable deeds and the purity of his life.

The multiplicity of his engagements, however, rendered a systematic use of his time essentially requisite. He divided the day into three equal portions—one of which he dedicated to study and devotional exercises, another to the discharge of his regal duties, and the third to repose and necessary relaxation. In order exactly to measure these periods, and as clocks had not then been introduced into Britain, he adopted the plan of burning candles in a lantern, each one of which was twelve inches long, and lasted four hours. The revenue derivable from his hereditary property he distributed in the same methodical manner; one-half was allotted to the support of monasteries, professors, and scholars at Oxford, and to relieving the wants of destitute monks; the other half was expended upon his household, encouraging the pursuits of clever artisans and in gifts to the numerous strangers who frequented his court. The poor and necessitous found him their best and most constant friend; the rich and the powerful retained his regard only while they avoided oppression and injustice. The imperial diadem has seldom adorned the brow of a monarch so distinguished as Alfred for unostentatious benevolence and virtuous conduct.

But a still more remarkable feature in his life was the extent of his literary acquirements. Though rare as are the instances in which we find intellectual eminence combined with the exalted rank of a sovereign, yet in Alfred's case mental accomplishments formed a very considerable part of his greatness; and, considering the scanty education that he received, the time occupied in military duties and in adjusting the affairs of the empire, we feel astonished at the rapid progress he made in learning and the practical purpose to which he devoted it. His could have been no ordinary mind, to have commenced acquiring a knowledge of Latin at the age of thirty-nine! The principal works he translated, some of which, however, are now little known, were Bede's "Ecclesiastical History," "Boethius on the Consolation of Philosophy," "Æsop's Fables," and Gregory's "Pastoral;" besides which, he commenced an English version of the Bible, but was unable to complete the undertaking. Poetry, to which he was very partial, he continued to write to the close of his days. In his preface to Gregory's "Pastoral" (a book that he much prized, and a copy of which he constantly carried about with him), he states:—"when I took the kingdom, very few on this side of the Humber, very few beyond, not one that I recollect south of the Thames, could understand their prayers in English, or could translate a letter from Latin into English." With a view to enlighten this general ignorance, and to excite a desire in the people for mental culture, he founded colleges at Oxford, invited men noted for their intellectual attainments from distant parts of his dominions as well as from abroad, to preside over them, as also to instruct in the schools—of which he, too, was the originator.

Among the most famous literary characters thus attracted to his court, were Asser, afterwards Bishop of Sherborne, his faithful friend and valuable biographer, and Johannes Scotus. The former lived with him on terms of the closest intimacy, and, it is said, suggested the building of the Oxford University; while the latter (sometimes called John the Scot) received from Alfred generous treatment, and found in England a peaceful asylum. He long enjoyed the king's friendship. His extensive knowledge, the power of his eloquence, and the cause of his death are cursorily referred to in the following epitaph, inscribed on his tomb. As a specimen of the poetic skill of the ninth century, it possesses more merit than might have been anticipated, from the darkness in which the literature of Parnassus was then shrouded.

"Here lies a saint the sophist John, whose days
On earth, were graced with deepest learning's praise;
Deemed meet at last by martyrdom to gain
Christ's kingdom, where the saints for ever reign."^{*}

But while fostering mental improvement, Alfred did not neglect to gather round him individuals who would introduce and benefit the arts and sciences. The progress of architecture, commerce, and navigation received an effective impulse. Some historians state that he fitted out an expedition to convey presents to the Christians of St. Thomas, in the East Indies, and that the vessels returned freighted with the products of that clime. We presume, however, that it proceeded principally by land; inasmuch as the mariner's compass was not invented till the year 1302, previously to which, sailing was inevitably restricted to the coast. In addition to this enterprise, Alfred maintained frequent communication with the Pope, who presented him, as a mark of esteem and honour, with several religious relics, and conferred considerable privileges upon the Saxon school at Rome.

With regard to the nature of his administration, we regret that the length to which we have already extended our article will preclude us from entering into detail upon this admirable trait in his character. He found the kingdom almost destitute of institutions calculated to maintain public order—he left it in a state of the most perfect security and tranquility. Of course this

^{*} William of Malmesbury's "English Chronicles."

result was not produced without a mighty organisation of the internal affairs of the empire. He divided England into counties, hundreds, and tythings; in the last of which the system of Frank-pledge was observed—that is, the reciprocal liability of each householder for the good conduct of his neighbours. He established four courts of law: one for the settlement of minor differences arising in the tithings, in which the decennary, or ten householders, dispensed justice; another, comprising ten decennaries, convened every month for the trial of more weighty matters; the third, consisting of the same persons as the former, who, however, appeared under arms, was held annually, chiefly for the purpose of inquiring into military and judicial affairs; the fourth, or county court, that assembled at Michaelmas and Easter, was composed of the freeholders of the shire, and presided over by the bishop, assisted by sheriffs and other officers. This court adjusted such disputes as might arise between the inhabitants of different hundreds, and took cognisance of appeals from the two first courts. But in order to render the administration of the law as equitable as possible, Alfred rigidly scrutinised the magistrates' qualifications, reprimanded and removed those who neglected their duties; and finally any person who deemed the verdict awarded in these tribunals unjust, had the privilege of appealing to the highest court—to the king himself. The people were not tardy in appreciating this inestimable boon.

The form of trial by jury (with the merits of which every one must be conversant) is another institution ascribed to Alfred's comprehensive mind. But with respect to the laws existing previously to his reign, he does not appear to have effected any very serious alteration, either in their nature or number; being apprehensive that his enactments might not be consonant with the wishes of his successors. Such, however, was the excellent manner in which the law was administered, that articles of great value, though exposed on the public roads, remained perfectly secure; and, notwithstanding the rigorous observance of the penal statutes, no undue limits were placed upon the people's liberty—in this particular, as well as in all others, he acted on an enlightened policy far in advance of his era.

He paid considerable attention, also, to the increase and improvement of England's naval resources—to the introduction of experienced, clever workmen—to the fortification of his kingdom, and to the repairing of such towns as had been desolated by the Danes. In every county he retained a body of troops, which in case of any sudden outbreak were ready to protect his dominions; and for the purpose of furnishing him with information, a statistical survey was taken of the whole island. This register was preserved at Winchester.

Besides these important measures, he established for the consideration of matters affecting the public, three councils; in the first of which he and his favourite ministers weighed the subjects to be submitted to the second council, formed of bishops, earls, viscounts, judges, barons, and those only whom the king requested to attend. The third, convened annually in London, was denominated the National Assembly (or in Saxon, the *Witena-gemot*), and comprised the nobility as well as representatives from the middle ranks. Succeeding ages have materially modified the features of these Germanic institutions, but there can be no question that it formed the basis upon which the cabinet and privy council and parliament of the present day have been founded.

Alfred's death occurred on the 28th of October, 901, after a glorious reign of twenty-nine years and six months. He left two sons and three daughters; to the former of whom he bequeathed various lands and five hundred pounds each; to his Queen Elswitha, and each of his daughters, certain villages and one hundred pounds; the rest of his property being devised to the clergy and other individuals. He was buried in somewhat of a patriarchal mode in Winchester Cathedral, where Edward, his son and successor, purchased from the ecclesiastical authorities a piece of ground at the rate of half-a-crown a foot! His other son, Ethelwerd, followed a recluse life, and is said to have been a man of considerable learning.

The life of Alfred presents us with a picture on which we can gaze with unmixed pleasure. All is harmony and beauty, nothing is harsh and discordant. The magnitude of his works, the purity of his character, the love he uniformly evinced towards his people, are subjects on which his countrymen may well dilate with enthusiastic admiration. The lapse of nine centuries has neither cooled their regard for him, nor weakened the opinion which they entertain of the immense benefits he has conferred upon England. In the far distant Indian empire, and in the Pontifical dominions, his name was venerated, his acts were applauded; and even in the hearts of the barbarous Northmen his generosity and humanity found in after years a ready response. Historians have felt an honest delight in placing him in the same rank with those great and noble spirits whose birth has been, and ever will be, the advent of a new epoch in the world's progress, the dawn of an extended civilisation. In short, no panegyric of ours is needed, to add one iota to the wreath of fame with which posterity has encircled the brow of the immortal Alfred.

THE CHILD AND THE SUNSET.

By FANNY E. LACY.

Full oft would I, in childhood's day,

With childhood's wondering mind,

Stand gazing on the tinted clouds

With the parting sun behind;

And thought that heaven's palaces

Were unto me so nigh,

It seemed as if with joyous bound

I unto heaven might fly.

Oh! 'twas a blest simplicity

To watch the lingering ray,

And view each bright revolving form

So softly fade away;

And think that angels' faces

Were smiling down on me,

Inviting to those heaven-lit ways,

With them in heaven to be.

But, happier now to walk the earth,

With glance still raised above,

A child still learning lessons there

Of wisdom fraught with love:

To know there is a brighter world

Beyond this world of sin,

And, viewing glories fade without,

To find my heaven within.

R R

PAUL PEVENSEY; OR, THE MAN FROM BELOW.*

CHAP. XXXVI.—RECONCILIATION.

PAUL, as I have observed at the close of the foregoing chapter, bore forth in his arms the young woman he found in the shed, and discovered he had been in a grievous error. If he had really murdered Redmond he had done so for no offence committed against himself. His companion was not Fanny Wilkinson, but another young actress, to whom, in despair of succeeding with Fanny, he had attached himself. Paul's agony of mind now knew no bounds, especially when Link, in his rough uncouth manner, observed—

"I think you have done his business, Paul."

"God forbid!" exclaimed the latter, dropping on his knees beside the body, having first deposited Miss Winwood somewhat roughly on the grass. "God forbid!" he exclaimed, and lifting up Redmond's head, and supporting it tenderly, he inwardly implored Heaven to come to his aid. There are usually pools of water in grazing fields, which, though they degenerate into thick puddles in summer, are still not without their use on occasions like the present. By Link's advice Redmond was borne to the side of the pond, and there, by a plentiful aspersion of the somewhat unsavoury fluid, recalled to consciousness; while Paul, under the influence of a double joy, that of having escaped the commission of a great crime, and the belief that all his suspicions of Fanny were unfounded, implored his forgiveness in the most earnest and vehement manner, reiterating every species of apology which he thought likely to soften the offended actor. Redmond was not implacable; extending his hand to Paul, he said—

"I have been wrong as well as you, let us henceforward be friends; but, he added, looking about wildly, where is Miss Winwood?"

Mr. Link had not been unmindful of that young lady's condition, but as soon as he saw Redmond beginning to revive, had proceeded to her assistance. He found her sitting upon the grass, in the act of endeavouring to recollect where she was, and informing her that no great harm had been done after all, brought her presently to the spot where the rivals, now become friends, were uttering mutual apologies and explanations. It was agreed that no notice whatever should be taken of what had happened, that the reconciliation of Paul and Redmond should apparently be gradual, and that they should all return together to the town as if they had accidentally met in their walk.

Delivered from the disturbing influence of jealousy, Paul proceeded assiduously with his studies, his mind expanding and acquiring fresh strength every day. Redmond, who in spite of his dissipated habits was not without a certain kindness of disposition, assisted him considerably by initiating him in the traditions of the stage, with which he was naturally much better acquainted than Mr. Link, and by bringing under his notice that department of literature which treats of the drama and its development.

Redmond, as I have said, was a man of talent, but without originality of mind, or fixedness of character; he was, therefore, in all things an imitator, and having studied the styles of acting of several celebrated performers, could without much difficulty reproduce them all in succession. From this it will be obvious that he had no system of his own; scarcely, indeed, could he be said to have any ideas or opinions peculiar to himself, because he had so completely subjected his understanding to the sway of others, that even when he seemed

most independent he was only giving utterance to ideas and notions which he remembered, and fancied to be his own.

Paul, on the contrary, was dogmatical and headstrong, like most persons of original character; he felt there was a good deal to like about Redmond, though experience taught him, in spite of himself, that with such a man real friendship was impossible. Paul was all energy, impulse, and enthusiasm; Redmond naturally cold and phlegmatic, but possessed by the desire to seem warm and impulsive, because thus alone could he hope to pass for a man of powerful intellect, which he coveted above all things. On several points Paul recognised his inferiority to Redmond, who had enjoyed the benefits of a regular education, and seen infinitely more of what is called the world. On these advantages he was inclined to insist and dilate as often as opportunity offered, especially as he loved to be thought the acquaintance of great people, as well as a man of fashion and intrigue. That he had now fallen below his proper level was not to be disguised. He confessed he was a mere actor, without fortune, without friends, without any other visible or tangible means of subsistence, but yet not without splendid expectations. He could not tell to what eminence he might not rise, and with these brilliant but shadowy prospects he had endeavoured to dazzle the mind of Fanny Wilkinson, but altogether without success; he therefore transferred his attentions to Miss Winwood, a person not much unlike himself, egotistical, worldly-minded, unimaginative, but yet capable, like most other women, of some degree of attachment. In person she was a pretty blonde, slender, and above the middle height, which rendered almost inexcusable Paul's mistaking her for Fanny in the forest. As a comic actress she had some merit, but never could bring herself to experience the least sympathy with the great characters of tragedy, whose passions bore them aloft into regions whither poor Miss Winwood's fancy was unable to follow. It was upon the whole fortunate she fell in with Redmond, since they suited each other exactly, neither of them having a single idea projecting beyond the region of self.

Into that modification of life which exists behind the scenes, particularly in a strolling company, I have no leisure to enter, though upon the whole I must say that it is far more respectable and exemplary than the out-of-door world are willing to believe. Full of troubles and difficulties it no doubt is. Poverty often shows itself there in its most menacing attitude, while the worthy denizens of that sphere of illusions are labouring, perhaps, to dazzle the public with shows of magnificence, and to deceive even themselves into the belief that they possess something of the poetic grandeur with which for a few fleeting hours they invest themselves. Actors and actresses, by all the accidents of their calling, are placed in a false position, being condemned habitually to deal with great ideas and conceptions, which, if they yield to the force of inspiration, lift them so far above the level of every-day life, that they are unable properly to attend to its concerns, and if they do not, desert them so completely, that they fail to command the necessary amount of sympathy from their audiences.

Yet there are compensating circumstances in the life of the stage which serve to reconcile people to it, notwithstanding its disadvantages; they who lead it live in an incessant whirl of excitement which quickens their most extravagant hopes into activity, and induces them to forget the disastrous realities of the present in intoxicating dreams of future triumph. Each individual actor or actress thinks the season of revival in public taste must come, when the drama will resume its pristine glory, and all its servants and expositors be raised to affluence. Fortunately the consciousness of incapacity presses itself upon few minds. Vanity whispers to us all that we possess within ourselves the germs of undeveloped greatness, and we live and die in the fond belief that mankind will recognise this pleasing truth, either while we are here to enjoy the results of the happy discovery, or after death shall have set his seal upon our performances, and made them in some measure classical, by rendering them independent of time and place, silencing envy, blunting the edge of personal animosity, and kindling, perhaps, those generous sympathies which the truly great always feel for persecuted and oppressed merit.

But to this posthumous justice the actor cannot look forward ; if not appreciated while he lives, he never can be. He addresses himself to present eyes and hearts, and has, properly speaking, no future. From the moment he sinks below the horizon his name is associated with nothing more than the echo of a reputation. He leaves behind him nothing to which mankind can appeal but the faint recollection of pleasure treasured up by his surviving contemporaries, and transmitted imperfectly to the succeeding age in books. And, yet, while he treads the boards, and sees before him those crowded and piled-up spectators whom he denominates the world clapping their hands and loudly applauding his performance, he, perhaps, experiences sensations more purely delightful than those of the greatest conqueror, since they are not necessarily associated with any ideas of criminality, or damped by any remorseful consciousness. And what is true of the actor is truer still of the actress. For in addition to the homage paid to her genius she witnesses the incense offered up to her beauty, and remembering that many have made but one short step from the stage to the most gorgeous mansions of nobility, she also expects to convert life into a romance, and soar from the lowest to the highest fortune.

CHAP. XXXVII.—A THOUSAND A YEAR.

AFTER the adventure above narrated, Paul pursued for some time the by-means noiseless tenor of his way, since he ranted and mouthed prodigiously for the gratification of the world, without encountering any fresh troubles. Fanny seemed to be now all his own, he had got rid of the rivalry of Redmond, and no new competitor had appeared in the field. Several times in the week he acted with her on the stage, and there, under the mask of another character, often addressed to her that fervid language of admiration, which, in imaginative and powerful characters, often approaches idolatry.

The Wilkinsons, by prudence and unremitting industry and economy, were growing comparatively wealthy, though they were still very far from possessing that amount of capital which would have enabled them to encounter the risks of a large theatre, even in one of the provincial capitals of the empire. Of necessity, therefore, they were keenly alive to every advantage held out to them by fortune. Paul, from being an incumbrance, had now come to be one of the chief stays of their company, since he acted ably and in a popular style and drew crowded audiences wherever they went. In every sense, therefore, they had reason to applaud their kindness to him, and looked forward with unmixed satisfaction to the prospect of his union with Fanny, waiting only till time should render it prudent.

One evening Fanny performed, at a town in Yorkshire, the character of Lady Macbeth, which ever since she became an actress had possessed extraordinary fascination for her. In dressing the part she followed a theory of her own, wore her own light hair, and sought by every means in her power to augment the feminine delicacy of her appearance. At first the audience were rather shocked, because what she did was contrary to usage. But in England originality is always viewed with more or less favour, and therefore the good people who for some time time fancied themselves displeased, at length recognised the truth of the conception, and rewarded it with tumultuous applause. Next morning at breakfast Fanny received a note from a gentleman of fortune, inviting her to a party the following evening at his house. Similar invitations were sent to Paul and Redmond, and at the proper time they proceeded together to the dwelling of their wealthy host, who they found lived in a very liberal way upon his own estate, with his mother and his sister.

Fanny was properly speaking the star of Wilkinson's company, though Paul now began to attract great attention, and to draw crowded audiences. It was around her, therefore, that all the people crowded at Mr. Westland's party ; and the host himself, highly educated, and greatly devoted to the drama, treated her with the most distinguished respect, handing her to and from the piano when she sang, and conversing with her as often as the proper share

of attention to the other guests rendered it practicable. Paul immediately put the most uncomfortable construction on these marks of politeness, and towards the close of the evening, when Mr. Westland took his place beside Fanny on the sofa, and entered upon a discussion with her on her conception of the character of Lady Macbeth, Paul felt assured that he beheld before him a dangerous rival, with whom it would be impossible for him to deal as he had dealt with Redmond. Trembling, therefore, with suppressed indignation and jealousy, he stood near, with the intention of joining, as soon as possible, in the conversation, that he might keep alive in Fanny's mind her recollection of him, of which the modesty of genuine passion taught him to doubt the force. He did not think her fickle, but he thought it quite possible that a better man might present himself, whose superiority she would not fail to recognise, and whom, without blame, she might prefer before him. The want, therefore, of overweening vanity rendered him jealous. It was in himself that he wanted faith, not in Fanny. He looked up to her as to one of whom he was altogether unworthy, though this conviction, instead of inducing him to relinquish hope, only rendered him the more fiercely eager to secure the prize. It will not, consequently, be difficult to imagine the state of inquietude and uncertainty with which he drew near the spot where Fanny and Mr. Westland were discussing the character of Lady Macbeth.

"I was much struck," observed that gentleman, "by your appearance on the stage as the Thane of Cawdor's wife in a manner so entirely at variance with all our received notions. We had been accustomed to see her person put as much as possible into harmony with her acts and ideas, though it would be difficult, perhaps, to explain what connection there is between dark eyes, black hair, a pale swarthy complexion and crime, especially when historically we know that some of the greatest criminals who figure in modern history have been fair."

"I was not aware of that fact," answered Fanny, "but I felt that a more powerful effect would be produced by representing a striking contrast between Lady Macbeth's appearance and her actions. From a scowling, fierce, fiendish-looking woman you expect nothing but displays of wickedness, and therefore you experience no surprise when, from the gratification of pride and ambition, she plunges into guilt. But when you behold a tender, fair, gentle-looking creature wielding daggers, trampling on the laws of hospitality, smearing people's faces at midnight with blood, and becoming the accomplice of the worst of crimes, you are infinitely shocked and startled, and driven to question and examine your theory of human nature, to ascertain whether in reality such things can be. If, as you say, experience has already answered in the affirmative, my conception of Lady Macbeth's personal appearance is at least justified. But perhaps my notion of her character is as little consonant with the received opinion as my view of what her costume and complexion should be."

"And what is your notion?" inquired Mr. Westland.

"I think," answered Fanny, with much diffidence and sweetness of manner, "that Lady Macbeth is upon the whole a great and noble woman, who becomes suddenly contaminated by an access of frenzied ambition. She aspires to be the wife of a king, not in order that she herself may exercise sovereignty, but that she may behold the sceptre in the hands of the man she loves. With a subtle sophistry not uncommon in women, she invests the deed of guilt with metaphysical disguises, invokes the intoxicating influence of power, suggests the imaginary solace which all their future days and nights would receive from reposing on the apex of sublunary affairs and giving law to the most turbulent wills around them. She feels that she is not to be the actor of this dreadful tragedy, but the contriving and persuading intelligence which is to employ man as its coarse instrument. Forestalling ideas too prevalent in our own times, she strips life of its sacred character, and ingeniously sophisticates herself into the belief that the end sanctifies the means; that to do great good it is lawful to do a little ill, and that to administer the whole realm of Scotland her husband may, without much soiling of his conscience, dispatch an old man to

his final account some few months or days, perhaps, before the time allotted him by nature."

"But this sophistry is very wicked," interposed Mr. Westland's mother, who, seated in an arm-chair, had hitherto listened in silence to Fanny's conversation.

"Yes, madam," answered Fanny; "it is indeed very wicked, and God forbid that I should for a moment dream of excusing it. I only desire to express an idea, which in the course of my studies has presented itself to me that Lady Macbeth is not a fiend in human form, but a woman, with a woman's heart and feelings, though for a moment perverted by a guilty passion."

"But does she not," inquired Mr. Westland, "give utterance to the most horrid ideas, and express a readiness to commit the worst of crimes should her husband prove unequal to their perpetration?"

"I admit," replied Fanny, "that she uses very vehement language, but throughout the whole play she does nothing but talk. Her most revolting speeches prove nothing; she tells us what she would do, but we never find her actually engaged in crime. That most shocking of all ideas that had she bound herself like her husband to do so by an oath, she would have taken the infant at her breast and dashed its brains out, is a mere rhetorical figure of speech. That she would under no circumstances have done so is clear from this, that she could not kill Duncan because he looked like her father in his sleep. Still less, then, could she have killed her baby, which would have reminded her of her husband and her dearest love. Her boast is one of those wild tricks of the imagination of which it is guilty in moments of tempestuous passion."

"To come to the point at once," observed Mr. Westland, "do you think that Lady Macbeth, if she were a real woman, living and breathing here before us, is one whom a man could love?"

"Excuse me, sir," cried Paul, "if I venture to give a reply to that question. With all Lady Macbeth's faults, I would marry her myself to-morrow."

"Indeed," exclaimed Fanny, looking him archly in the face.

"That is," answered Paul, hesitatingly, and blushing deeply—"that is supposing I loved nobody else."

Mr. Westland was so earnestly engaged in gazing upon Fanny, that he did not notice Paul's confusion, "I am very much struck by the novelty of your ideas, Miss Wilkinson," said he, "but know not how to reconcile them with the general impression to the contrary. Everybody entertains a horrid idea of Lady Macbeth. She appears to their imagination robed as it were in sanguine vapour, and surrounded by the steams of blood. In looking on her little white hand, they behold nothing but the ruddy, damning spot upon it. They forget altogether that she is a woman, a young and beautiful woman; a wife and a mother. How is this? I am unable to explain it to myself."

"And what is difficult to you," answered Fanny, "a man of education and acquainted with the world, must be impossible to me. Yet I fancy I have a sort of dim perception of how the thing may have come to pass."

"Pray favour me with it, Miss Wilkinson."

"Well," observed she, "I think there are two reasons which may account for the prevalence of a false impression. First, people usually see the play before they read it, and it is one of the tricks of the stage to seize upon the most terrible emotions, to associate them with a particular tragic character, and to rivet as it were the minds of the audience with the single point in the development of that character which is the most likely to produce the deepest effect on the feelings and on the memory. Second, people only see Lady Macbeth during her moments of excitement and during her connection with crime. They forget all her gentler hours, they never picture her to themselves with her baby on her knee, or affectionately attending upon the father whom it is clear she deeply loved, or embracing tenderly the husband of her choice. These things the poet for his own purposes has kept out of sight, and the public, for the most part, can only see what is placed palpably before them. I am, of course, arguing as if Lady Macbeth were a real woman. We do not see all that goes necessarily

to the making up of so lofty a character—so intellectual, so self dependent, so full of sovereign will, so imaginative, so resolute; daring, yet kind and affectionate. We only behold the single vice which blots the fair scutcheon. But this appears wrong to me, and shows that in criticising Shakespeare we often lose sight of the principles upon which our judgments should be based."

Mr. Westland replied her theory was so new to him that he must once more read the play and think on the subject before he discussed it further. Conversation then glided into the ordinary channels, and the rest of the evening was passed in the common-place way.

For nearly three weeks Mr. Westland was a constant attendant on the theatre, and wherever Fanny was invited contrived to be of the party. At the end of that time he called upon Mr. Wilkinson, and formally proposed for Fanny, and offered to settle upon her a thousand a year. He had no reason to expect a refusal, being young, handsome, and agreeable, as well as rich; and the father's heart leaped at the splendid prospect which such a marriage would hold out, not only to Fanny, but to them all. However, he said he would take time to consider of the matter, and the moment Mr. Westland left proceeded to hold with his wife a council of war. He knew the attachment which existed between Fanny and Paul—but then the idea of a thousand a year! Paul himself must see the reasonableness of the sacrifice. Mrs. Wilkinson was not quite so sure of this, and equally doubtful was she whether Fanny would see it; she, therefore, after much consultation and discussion, said, that as a mother she knew but of one way of settling the affair, which was to leave it entirely to Fanny herself. This the father could not deny was reasonable, and the young actress was called in to decide upon her own fate. When she had heard the whole story, the comments and interpretations of her father and mother, she exclaimed—

"Oh, dear papa; can you have any doubt as to what I shall say? Why, I would not give up Paul for the universe; and then, what do I want with a thousand a year?—or you either, papa? We are as happy as princes now. I love you and my mother. I love the stage, and would not willingly quit you and it for all the wealth in England. Besides, I have encouraged Paul to believe that I will be his wife, and that I love him with all my heart. After this, would not you despise and be ashamed of me if I could sell myself to Mr. Westland, whom of course I could no more think of loving than the man in the moon? If Paul were a bad character, it would be another thing. But he is all that you could wish; honest, faithful, generous, and as fond of me as a tiger. Indeed, I do believe he's got the blood in him, and that he would tear me to pieces if I were unfaithful, which I never will be, for the richest and handsomest man that breathes—so don't think of it for a moment, 'pa. Give Mr. Westland a civil answer, and let us be off to-morrow; I've no notion of being bored by his addresses."

Our worthy strolling manager relinquished the prospects of a thousand a year with reluctance; but was far too good, kind, and clear-sighted to think of forcing his daughter's inclinations, or to believe that the attempt would be of any use. He therefore complied with her wishes, and within four-and-twenty hours they were on their way to the next town.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—RE-APPEARANCE OF AN OLD FRIEND.

PLAYERS, it is well known, have a great fancy for high-sounding and aristocratic names, and therefore though some few remain content with the uncouth appellations which their unlucky stars have conferred upon them, the greater number become Mordaunts and Nevilles, Howards, and the Lord knows what. Paul Pevensey, for his sins, fell into this foolish practice, and was known on the stage as Mr. De Valensy, which had as well a foreign as an aristocratic air about it. Pevensey would have perhaps been quite as agreeable, but not so grand, and consequently our hero, whose ambition soared as high as there was any place in the universe to take it to, rejoiced in the prenomén, nomen, and cognomen

of Frederick Augustus De Valenssey. This step he took under the influence of Mr. Redmond, who having been denominated Frank Walker by his god-fathers and god-mothers, had contemptuously dropped those plebeian syllables, and christened himself Plantagenet Redmond.

This fact I have thought proper to mention, not that it is of any importance, but simply because it is a fact; henceforward we must consider Mr. Paul Pevensey as utterly absorbed and lost in Mr. Augustus De Valenssey. His stage companions, used to masquerading, recognised the change, and De Valenssey sided him to his heart's content—all except Tom Link, who regarded it as a piece of ridiculous foolery, and insisted on the privilege of sticking to Paul Pevensey. "I shant call you Frederick Augustus, and so I warn you of that; so don't expect it—you'll always be Paul to me, and nothing else."

"My dear Mr. Link," cried Paul, "that is exactly what I wish, and really am sorry already that I did not follow your advice. But it's too late now, I'm known to the world as De Valenssey, and I should lose what little reputation I have acquired."

"I don't deny that," replied Link, "but that's just what I told you at the outset. However, it can't be helped now, as long as you remain on the stage the name of De Valenssey must stick to you, but between ourselves I shant call you by any such ridiculous name."

In the course of their peregrinations the Wilkinsons found themselves at Worcester, where some days after their arrival Paul appeared in the character of Orlando, in *As you like it*. He was always deeply affected by the forlorn situation of the hero of the play, which in some degree resembled his own, though Orlando had never been one-hundredth part so desolate and wretched as he; he therefore threw his whole soul into the character, and when, in company with old Adam, he departs as an exile from the house of his father, Sir Roland de Bois, he looked so wretched and woe-begone that the brightest eyes in the theatre were usually filled with tears.

On the occasion in question a lady seated in one of the boxes, with a gentleman and two fine children by her side, was so exceedingly struck and affected by the appearance of the young actor, that it was with some difficulty she sat out the piece. As she looked upon him a thousand strange and vague ideas flitted across her mind. Like him she could not exactly say he was, but yet he reminded her strongly of a person she had known and loved. It was very strange, but yet there could be nothing in it; if alive he would be about the age of Mr. De Valenssey, but this was obviously a man of education and a gentleman, a dashing, proud, and handsome man, who had no doubt seen much of the world, while the poor dear object of her love would necessarily have been the very contrary, except, indeed, in beauty, in which he as much surpassed Mr. De Valenssey as the latter did him in appearance and manners, that is, according to the best of her recollection; yet there was something in his looks, and very much in his voice, which reminded her of other days—days of mingled sweetness and bitterness, in which her heart was distracted by the opposing emotions of love and fear. Sometimes as she gazed her heart was flooded with maternal yearnings, called into existence by some tone of the actor's voice. Presently, again, reason came in to dry up and disperse these delicious feelings. It could not—oh, it could not be.

The reader will readily have divined that this was no other than Kate Pevensey, who, as the wife of Mr. Stanley, had returned from the east, polished, refined, but as fond and affectionate as ever. The mother of two pretty daughters, who, like herself, had somewhat of the languor of Asia in their countenance and eyes, she would have given the world to know what the reader knows—that the young actor before her was her son Paul; yet, somehow, the man reminded her of the child. Nature had been true to herself in its development; in growing he had altered very much, but yet the basis of the features remained, that arch, fierce, affectionate expression, which made people love him, though with a slight mixture of apprehension. The feeling in some

sort resembled that with which we regard a tame panther; we see, know, and are sure the creature loves us, and are fascinated by its beauty, and those thousand winning tricks and gambols which the fiercest animals delight in, more, perhaps, than others; but when we behold the glitter of its eyes, and remember the strength of its teeth, and the length of its claws, and the irresistible power which lies latent in its frame, a slight consciousness of danger mingles with our pleasure; we feel well assured it won't hurt us, but can never quite forget that it could annihilate us in a moment if it would.

As Mrs. Stanley looked upon her son all the events of her life passed in procession before her. Time had changed the material mould in which her soul was tabernacled, but not that soul itself; that was as ardent, fresh, and loving as at the first moment when she appeared before the reader. Time never subdues love, it only enables us to distinguish the counterfeit from the true—that which is genuine is part of the soul, and, like it, must be immortal. She asked herself, in the language of Scripture, "Can a mother forget her son?" A thousand holy associations, recollections of cherished pains, remembrance of delicious sorrows, visions of the cradle of innocence, of infancy, of hope and fear, broke upon and agitated her mind. She remembered when she was desolate in her lonely cottage, and when the weight of Paul's head pillowed on her bosom seemed to still the anguish of her heart, when his smiles cheered her, and when the clasping of his little arms about her neck, and the nestling of his cheek against hers kept alive her hopes, and constituted her only solace in life; and could accident and chance in the lapse of a few years have spread so thick a mist between them that now, though they stood face to face, they did not know each other? The mother, indeed, not by instinct but by memory, perusing the lineaments of the actor acquired some obscured suspicion of the truth; yet she concealed her suspicion from her husband, for it seemed to be built upon so slight a foundation that she feared she should only appear to him as a dreamer.

With respect to Paul himself, had the bare thought that his mother was among the audience crossed his mind, all his powers would have been paralysed in a moment; feeling would have swallowed up everything else. The man who has lost his mother young, but yet old enough to remember her, thinks of her ever after as of a being formed of a different clay from others. It is a love like no other love except that which great and heroic souls feel for God. The world may render us unmindful of our duty, but it can never quench in noble minds this sacred sentiment, which forms the basis that supports all that is pure, lofty, and glorious in our moral and intellectual nature: it is a love which interferes with no other love, but rather strengthens it, by creating in the heart the habit of loving, which we do from our cradles till the entrance to the narrow house closes upon us; and unhappy, so as almost to seem accursed, would that man be who in his passage over this bank and shoal of time should love and be loved by no one.

"My dear Kate," exclaimed Stanley, looking at his wife; "what is the matter? You look pale and agitated, are you ill? Why do you keep looking at the stage so—does it awaken any painful associations? Ah, my God! you tremble, let us go home."

"No, Laurence," answered she, in a whisper, "we will remain. I am much agitated indeed, but I fear it is a foolish thought; however, you shall judge of that by-and-bye. I cannot explain more at present."

The play went on, and Paul at length disappeared from the stage, upon which Mrs. Stanley rose, and said "Now, Laurence, we will go home. I'm anxious to tell you my thoughts, though I fear you will consider them unreasonable." When they were at home, and when little Kate and Laurencia had gone to bed, she communicated to her husband the idea that the young actor who played Orlando might possibly be their son Paul.

"Well," observed the husband, "now you mention it, his face did seem connected with familiar associations, and is really something like yours. It is so handsome and noble."

Mrs. Stanley smiled.

"You know, Kate, that your face has been always the beau ideal of beauty to me, and upon my word, that young man is something like you. However, we can easily clear up the point. We will invite him next Wednesday to our party, and that there may not seem to be anything particular in the attention we pay him, we will invite the other principal performers along with him. Miss Wilkinson is a most charming person, and Mr. Redmond has very much the air of being a gentleman.

"Well, it is very kind of you, Laurence; but suppose it should'n't be he after all?"

"There will be no harm done, Kate. Indeed, I am not sanguine, but it is our duty to inquire into this matter."

"Oh! but I shall be so disappointed. I'd give the world to find it true! I hope he has formed no bad habits; but it does not matter, all my desire is that I may find our son, whose loss is the only drawback to the happiness of my life."

"Well, my dear," replied Stanley, "it is our duty, as I said, to search and inquire; but his apparent loss may be designed by Providence as a chastening for us both, though I wish the weight of it could have fallen upon me alone, since from the moment of our first meeting I alone have been culpable."

"Nay, not so, Laurence, the consciousness of many, many faults oppresses me also. I was doatingly fond of that boy, yet now I reproach myself with neglecting him. Oh! that Providence would restore to me my child! I would make up by kindness and tenderness, as far as possible, for what I ought to have done before."

THE OLD STONE OF DARTMOOR.

By MARY ROBERTS,

AUTHOR OF "RUINS AND OLD TREES," &c.

BEHOLD in me an old stone, exceeding old and grey. Men must seek diligently to find me, for I stand in the wildest part of Dartmoor, alone in my solitude, for around me there are no signs of life, except, that a few sheep graze occasionally on the short coarse herbage; and that the black eagle and mysterious bird of Oxenham, with her breast white and unsullied as the winter snow, utter their cries of angury and evil. The melancholy-looking snakeweed grows at my base, with the enchanter's nightshade, vervain, and henbane, herbs of power. Ages back, gray lichens struck their roots into the cracks which storms had wrought; they decayed as time passed on, others of a larger growth took their places, and now the black maiden hair and adder's tongue spring from out the fissures, and my hoary head is crowned with long pendant lichens, and that wild corn, emblem of my utter desolation, wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.

Traveller, why comest thou hither? Wouldst thou gather instruction from trees and stones? Alas! trees there are none, except a few low stunted oaks seen dimly on the hill of bards, but stones are plentiful, and if thou lookest narrowly thou may'st see beside yonder fast flowing stream, the foundations of stone huts, where dwelt men that are forgotten. Wouldst thou seek to know who placed me here? Listen, then. The wild wind of the vast moor is my interpreter. Sighing through the thriftless corn, its trembling reeds utter a soft murmur—they will speak for me.

Yonder sun arose as it now rises, and passed in might and glory over the

vast expanse of this once peopled solitude, when a company of white-robed Druids, bearing branches of mistletoe, and attended by men clad in skins, and dyed blue with woad, commanded them to fashion my huge bulk. Thus enjoined they wrought steadily, often beneath the light of the full moon, and often in rain and wind, till I stood as now I stand, and around me uprose a circle of stones, of which each solid base was firmly and deeply seated.

"Ah!" said the old stone, or rather said its whispering reeds, "when this was done, how gloriously we stood on our proud eminence; no lichen had then dared to strike its roots into my stately column. I was crowned with wreaths of sacred flowers, and libations were poured on my head. Men hailed me as the representative of power, and bowed low in passing. Multitudes came to this high place, watching for the morning rays, when all around was fresh, verdurous, and joyful, and light wreathing mists were seen to roll from off the kindling landscape. It was thus that the Druids allured their votaries with the pleasant appliances of flowers and sunbeams, to delight in worshipping that bright luminary which seemed as the symbol of beneficence. To the worship of the sun was appended that of the wandering moon; she was made a declaration of times, and a sign to the world, shining in the firmament of heaven, its beauty and the glory of the stars. British women made cakes to worship her, and poured out libations to the queen of heaven. Where stands yonder grove of dwarf oak trees, stunted by fierce winds that sweep through the valley of the Dart, twisted, tortuous, and moss-grown, priestesses adored her, whose bright beams lighted up the sacred place where they worshipped. Ah! those dwarf oaks seem rooted there as if in mockery of the majestic trees that spread their branches far and wide when priestesses walked beneath them, and priests went forth, clothed in white, to cut the sacred mistletoe from off their branches with a golden knife.

Festivals were held around me, rites of the British *Godo* or *Ceres*, observed with exceeding ceremony at the time of harvest. A sacred fire was kindled on my summit to her honour, blazing for a year and day; women carrying boughs, and children having their hands filled with flowers danced around the mystic circle formed by my subject stones. They sung too, and their joyous voices sounded in unison with the answering shouts that responded from one hill top to another. *Godo* was believed to foster the fruits of harvest, and to her the finest ears of corn were presented by the officiating priest, while his brethren formed around him the mystic circle held sacred in all observances and rites. Flowers, beauteous symbols of purity, were strewn on every side; this dull lone space, with a few broken stones, just seen above the grass, was often covered both in spring and autumn, with sweet and fragrant offerings. Think not that the moor looked then, as now it looks—flowers grew here profusely, and young children gathered them.

But now the sun attained his meridian height in the blue heavens, the wind became a zephyr, and the zephyr passed away. The traveller heard, while yet it lingered among the reeds, only broken words, which told of white robes, and mysterious harpings.

He came again—the wind then was high. Grey masses of rolling clouds moved majestically across the heavens, and the storm-beaten stone looked more desolate than ever. Presently the reeds began to rustle, and words came forth of fearful import.

Stranger, art thou here again? I spoke of sunbeams and bright flowers, of robes and music, when last thou watched beside me. Thou shalt hear the reverse of these.

Seest thou yonder stunted hawthorn with the white blossoms, growing beside the bright stream that flashes among the stones? Thou seest nought, save that tree and river; thou heareth nought save its murmur, and the gentle rustling of the hawthorn leaves. It is well for thee thou couldst not bear the sight of what I am about to tell thee; the vision of what passed there is ever before me.

Near that hawthorn, a British youth had erected his dwelling. He was one of the aspirants after knowledge, and excelled in all manly exercises; nay more, he had gained prizes in feats of song, and I often heard his fine full-flowing, manly voice, chanting the songs of his father land to the maiden he loved. Among the many who came daily to worship within my charmed circle, none might compare with them. They seemed beings of a higher order, and I looked at them, when in the cool of a bright summer evening he first traced the foundations of his home, and reared by degrees the dwelling wherein all his thoughts of bliss were centered. And when that home was reared, rude though it might be, and she had crossed its threshold with her young companions crowned with flowers according to their custom, and came forth again, I thought that so bright a vision, perchance even the arch Druid had never beheld. The youth had kindled his fire on the hearth, at the coming in of winter. I could see its bright flickering flame in the gloom of evening—it burned steadily from day to day, and the time drew near when he would no longer watch alone its gleaming flame, and pile fresh fuel on the solitary hearth. Now came the last day of October, that day which seems to banish all pleasant thoughts of sunbeams and soft winds chasing the summer clouds, and bids all men prepare for the coming in of dark November with its sleet and fog. In the joyousness of his heart, he put out the fire on the hearth, according to ancient custom, and hastened to the home of his beloved, hopeful and rejoicing.

"Go," said her parents, "to the priest, and make thy offering for the sacred branch, kindled upon the altar. We have purchased for ourselves, and relit our household fire."

But the youth did not heed them; he was talking with his betrothed.

"Go," they said again,—"take care that thou dost not fail. This is the doomed one's day."

Thus much they had heard, but scarcely understood its meaning, and the orphan youth knew less.

At length, feigning impatience at their importunities, he snatched up a branch with the vehement joyfulness natural to his age, kindled it from off the hearth, and bounded forth into the night. The dry branch burned furiously, and on he ran, till having reached his hut, a cheerful blaze was quickly seen, where all had been dark before. The priest saw that light, and I heard that his lip quivered. As the angel of vengeance, silently, yet swiftly, he went forth, and crossed the threshold of the new-built hut.

"Ah, young man, from whence that light?"

"I have rekindled," said the youth, "my fire upon the hearth, according to ancient custom."

"Where gained thou the fire?"

"I snatched it from the hearth of my intended parents."

"Did they consent?"

"O no; they tried to prevent me, but I was too quick for them."

"And thy betrothed—what did she?"

"She had nearly caught my arm, but I bounded over the threshold. I heard swift steps, and voices calling loudly, but I cried, 'Catch me if you can!'"

"It was well for her—for them," solemnly rejoined the priest; "but for thee, young man, thou art a doomed one," and the countenance of the priest was terrible.

The youth began to tremble. He had known the priest from childhood, and had been instructed by him in the higher degrees of knowledge, and had found him both kind and good. He pleaded that in the joyousness of his heart he had neglected the solemn rite which pertained to the closing month, he prayed earnestly for mercy, but he found it not.

Vain, too, were the entreaties of his betrothed; of all those who loved, and had known him from his boyhood days. It might be that the priest felt pity, but he had no power to forgive.

Next came the terrific sentence of excommunication, and never from that dreadful hour was his cold hearth cheered with a gleam of fire. His cattle were taken from him, his innocent sheep driven far away, and even his faithful dog was no more seen. Snow fell fast, the ground was frozen, and the wind howled mournfully, while the doomed one wasted away in his lone hut. No one dared either to aid or pity him; the same terrific doom awaited those who would otherwise have died to save him, if either food or warmth had been bestowed. I have seen the British maiden steal to that lone hut, when she hoped that the Druids would not discover her; they were gone, perchance, their rounds, or perhaps they would not deprive the doomed of the only solace that remained to him. I have seen her by the pale light of the moon enter that wretched place, and urge him to partake of the food she brought. But she could not prevail. He would not consign her to the same hopeless misery.

Night after night she went, till her poor wasted form looked like one of those light silvery vapours that steal over this wild moor. At length she failed, her steps could not bear her any longer, and she was laid to rest near the hut of her parents.

I heard low voices speaking solemnly one night, and a shrouded figure was borne from out the hut, but whither I know not. Some said that one grave held them both; others that the wildest of our torrents bore him to the sea. But this I did not believe. Water is the emblem of life and purity, and who would thus pollute the stream?

Year by year the hut of the doomed one mouldered away, for none would dwell where he had perished. The roof fell in, and grass sprung from the interstices in the walls; one stone came down, and then another; next came a heap of ruins; mosses grew thereon, till at length a slight mound alone pointed out the site of the doomed hut.

I heard but yesterday a daughter of thy race repeating beside me verses to her companions in honour of white-robed Druids, and circles of unhewn stone. She sung, and her voice sounded sweetly, of harps glittering to the moon, and groves of consecrated oaks. No wind then was stirring on the moor, or words, such as she never heard before, would have hushed that song.

Stranger, my tale is ended; but whenever thou hearest these strange imaginings, remember the Doomed Hut.

THE ECHO OF THE HEART.

Amidst the halls of memory,

We oft hear whispered still

Some broken strains of harmony

To which our pulses thrill;

Old faces throng around again,

Old voices we knew well,

Whene'er is heard that phantom strain,

On which we loved to dwell.

Again the one loved form we clasp,

And breathe the vows of old,

Again the hand of friendship grasp,

And feel not it is cold;

The fond emotions once they gave,

Then flung o'er life a spell,

But now the heart is but a grave

For all we loved so well.

E. L. B.

"And," said he, "I shall constitute them my heirs—my property shall be divided between them equally or not according as their conduct and character may be."

THE HEIRS OF PLUMSTOCK.

"It is an ill wind that blows no one good."—*Old Proverb.*

ABOUT a hundred years ago, there stood far in one of the Western counties, one of those ancient family mansions handed down for generations from father to son, once so common in England, known by the name of Plumstock Hall. It was a huge dwelling, built with much more attention to comfort and convenience than to architectural elegance. There was no single part about it like another. If a range of windows extended along this side, a bare wall was all that met the eyes on the other; if a mighty stack of chimneys was piled up at one corner, that opposite was naked, flat, and devoid of ornament; if one flight of stairs was broad and capacious, that succeeding was narrow and winding; where one looked for spacious chambers, there were so many partitions and small corners that no space was left; and, on the contrary, when you thought you had reached the utmost limits of the house, a large suite of rooms opened up to your view. Yet, with all this incongruity of structure, as you turned the winding sweep of the high road and first caught sight of Plumstock Hall, boldly towering above all the dwellings around, on a broad sketch of cultivated country, the *coup d'œil* was striking and even grand.

The owner of this mansion was Sir Childe Hallet, a worthy man, and not undeserving of the popularity he enjoyed among the gentry of the surrounding neighbourhood. He was benevolent, and though economising even to parsimony in his private expenses, never grudged a barrel of ale, or a baron of beef, or flitch of home-cured bacon as a free gift on feasts and holidays, to the numerous servants and others employed upon his estate. And his charity ended not here; the widow and the orphan knew, and never recollected him but with a kindly feeling; and, indeed, it would have been marvellous had not such been the case, seeing that he never had been known to turn the suppliant for assistance from his door.

Yet he was an eccentric character, and often committed strange and unaccountable actions, the meaning of which was inexplicable, even to those who knew him best. And in this particular, kindly-spoken and bland as he at other times was, if any presumed to jest with him upon the subject of his, as they termed them mad freaks, he would grow serious, and desire that he might be suffered to do as he pleased, without any man's calling him to account. As he never said aught but this in answer to such remarks, the practice of making them was in time dropped, and Sir Childe Hallet indulged in his curious fancies undisturbed.

Among the habits that excited the curiosity and surprise of the gossips of Plumstock was one which, though it might appear ridiculous at the present day, was not in reality at all so in those times when investment was not quite so safe as it is now. The yearly revenue brought in by the estates from which Sir Childe Hallet derived his income amounted to about five thousand pounds sterling. Regularly every year three-fifths of this had been stowed away in a huge iron chest kept in the house, but the exact locality of which none save the baronet himself knew. As he had pursued this plan with rigid strictness since the age of twenty-two, at which time he had come into possession of his paternal estates, a large sum had at the time when our history opens been amassed, he being now sixty-five years old.

Sir Childe, whose natural habits, when drawn into conversation concerning his own affairs, were reserved and distant, suddenly gave forth the announcement to his friends and acquaintance, that he had two nephews whom he now intended to invite to Plumstock Hall.

"And," said he, "I shall constitute them my heirs—my property shall be divided between them, equally or not according as their conduct and character shall please me."

This resolution, once taken, was forthwith carried into effect. Two letters were dispatched to Laurence and Robert Hallet respectively, the former then residing in London, the latter living on his wits at Paris.

Both these young men were fortuneless orphans, and I will take this opportunity, in a few words, to sketch the nature, temperament, and disposition of each.

Robert, five years the elder, was of an artful and designing character, yet with an open countenance and exceedingly winning manners. Most people disliked him at first, but were soon won over to regard him favourably, until they discovered, from unhappy experience, that the fine and open exterior was but the cloak of a double and intriguing mind, whose energies were never directed according to its own inclination, unless employed in consummating some act of dishonesty and fraud. Laurence was of a far less showy character, yet what he said in your presence you could depend upon his repeating when among others. Wanting Robert's insinuating and graceful manner, his open and honest look gained your good opinion at once. And having said thus much of the two cousins, who, for all their opposite characters, were openly on very good terms one with the other, I shall immediately bring them into action, as they are to perform the principal part in the simple but yet strange history I am about to relate.

They both reached Plumstock, as near as possible, at the same time, Laurence having had to settle his affairs in London before availing himself of his uncle's invitation, while Robert's departure from Paris was not delayed a single hour. The evening succeeding that of their arrival a large party met at the hall, most of the squires and gentry of the surrounding neighbourhood came with portions of their families. The dingy old chambers grew light again, again the ruddy wine flowed plentifully as of yore, and songs and laughter and dancing shook the ancient boards that for so many years had been trodden but by the cold step of formality. Festivity was kept up for many hours, till the light of the winter morning peeped through the windows. Next day they divided into parties, each consulting its own pleasures, and hunted, or rode, or walked about the woods and fields, the weather being delightfully bracing and frosty. Robert Hallet was all courtesousness and attention to his uncle, as was Laurence; but with this difference, that whereas the latter was consistent in his conduct while in his presence, he never neglected to say a kind word for the old man when among those who, while they shared and enjoyed his hospitality, did not scorn to malign and sneer at him when not in his company; Robert, on the contrary, though obsequious and full of flattery while there was a possibility of his uncle's noticing it, behind his back used the most disrespectful expressions concerning him, called him a covetous old miser, and ridiculing his manners. Yet, though he played the hypocrite with consummate skill, his uncle in his own heart preferred Laurence, though he allowed none to perceive this by his manner.

One night Robert sat in the great hall with a party of young men and caroused to a very late hour. After the others had retired to rest he sat before the huge fire for some time brooding on his schemes of deception, till, wearied, he rose to go to his chamber, and neglecting to take a light with him proceeded up the staircase and reached a landing-place, where several corridors and narrow passages branched off. Being somewhat deep in wine his intellect was at the moment none of the clearest, and he took the wrong turning. Not perceiving his mistake he continued passing on through many windings and twistings until he arrived in a great corridor, at the further end of which was an open door, through which the unsteady light of a fire streamed. Though now convinced he was not going in the right direction, curiosity prompted him to proceed until he reached the entrance of a huge room, at the further extremity of which a

large fire burnt merrily, diffusing a ruddy comfort through the chamber. The broad lofty walls were hung here and there with dingy paintings, and curtains, once splendid and gaudy, but now mouldering, dusty, and dull, swept in massive folds from the ceiling to the floor. A capacious table, entirely draped with green cloth, stood in the centre, while a kind of unwieldy, heavy desk was placed opposite the hearth, with a couple of chairs of curious and antique construction close to it.

Robert was now about to turn back and endeavour to regain the landing-place, when the sound of distant footsteps, evidently advancing towards him, caused him to pause. Conceiving that it might be his uncle, who was a strictly sober man, and conscious of his own disorderly and excited state of half intoxication, he looked around for some place of momentary concealment, as he would not on any account have allowed the baronet to have seen him as he then was.

There being nothing else available, he, without loss of time, got under the table, and arranging the cloth again, remained without making the least noise that might betray his presence to those whom he now heard advancing rapidly along the great corridor. More than one he felt sure there were, for he heard suppressed conversation; and, besides, the footsteps were not those of a single person. Whom they were, and what might be their object in coming thither at that hour of the night he could not divine. He had, however, heard much of the old baronet's peculiarities, and was therefore prepared for curious scenes being enacted at Plumstock.

His suspense was shortly relieved by seeing Sir Childe enter the silent room, accompanied by a tall melancholy-looking man, habited in black, who held a roll of papers and a small leathern case in his hand.

"You understand me, Greppet?" said the baronet. "They are both very well disposed young men, but still one strikes me as more worthy of my preference than the other. I will, therefore, leave Robert all my landed property; Lawrence shall have the chest, of which there is an accurate description among those papers."

"And the hall?" inquired the man in black.

"Must go to Robert," replied Sir Childe; and after some further preliminary observations the melancholy man drew up a will in form, giving and bequeathing all Sir Childe's landed property, Plumstock Hall, and all contained therein, save and except the iron chest, to Robert Hallet, and the said iron chest and its contents was to be given and bequeathed to Laurence Hallet.

"Robert is the elder?" inquired the notary.

"By five years," replied Sir Childe.

"Ah, the landed property generally goes to the elder," said the other.

"There was no absolute necessity for it in this case," answered the baronet.

Robert heard this announcement, and was exceedingly rejoiced at it. He fancied the baronet had cut off his younger cousin with a paltry sum in cash, and from preference to himself had bequeathed him all the estates, together with the hall. He, while congratulating himself in spirit as the future lord of Plumstock, knew not of the enormous wealth lying in the iron chest; nor was he aware of the fact that a large portion of the Plumstock estate was to pass into other hands at the death of the present possessor. Yet, though gratified at what he had heard, his heart was not so dead to the knowledge of good and evil but that a secret feeling of self-contempt crept over his mind, but instead of exerting its legitimate influence upon him it only led him on in his bad career. He knew he was committing an act of despicable meanness in thus watching in a place where he had no right to be, and in listening to what he should not hear. If his conscience, however, made a faint effort to remind him of the wrong he was doing, he choked the voice with specious silent excuses, and betook himself to listening again.

"The miser is not long for this world," said he to himself; "I shall soon call all this my own, and then if I live a dull dreamy life at Plumstock its walls shall speak in complaint to me."

However, notwithstanding the thoughts of the comfortable life in store for him, he at length grew tired of crouching, as he was obliged to do, without stirring hand or foot, under the table, and looked anxiously for the moment when the midnight conference should be ended, and he be enabled to withdraw. Long, however, had he to wait, for the lamps mingled their brilliant lights with the first grey streaks of early morning ere the baronet and the man of law left the chamber. When the sound of their receding footsteps had for some time died away upon his ear, Robert left his hiding-place, and full of joy and contentment retired to his bed-chamber, where he was soon far in the land of sleep.

After this matter at the hall went on for some time in one unbroken routine of festivity and hilarity, until all the guests had outstayed even decent limits, and no excuse remained any longer for trespassing on the baronet's hospitality. He, however, invited them for the fourth time to renew the period of their first invitation, but none were bold enough to accept it again, and at length none remained with Sir Childe save his two nephews.

Laurence, who knew nothing of the existence of the will, continued the same, neither increasing nor decreasing in his kindness to his uncle. Robert, on the contrary, plied him assiduously with attentions, was never out of his call, and, as the old man was fond of reading, never seemed to tire of overhauling musty tomes and mouldy manuscripts for him. Lawrence continually did the same; but having no such ulterior object, and not having the part of a hypocrite to play, seemed not more devoted to his uncle than he in reality was, while his cousin was never weary of pleasing. The baronet had but to mention a wish, and Robert was immediately eager and indefatigable in accomplishing it for him; and when all the household had retired to rest, he would seek his chamber, slam the door violently, stamp with his foot on the ground, and curse the old man for being, as he expressed it, "so infernally tough and long-lived."

One morning Robert had been reading with Sir Childe in the library, when the latter looking at him, as he fancied, with a severe expression in his countenance, suddenly desired him to stop for a moment or two, and read to himself. He smilingly complied, and appeared to give himself up intently to the volume before him, though in heart measuring the old man's probable length of life, and speculating how long he should have to do such dull work for the bright reward he anticipated. The baronet, as was his wont when acting on a sudden resolution, wrote a letter hastily, left it open on the table, and quitted the room for a moment. No sooner had he gone than Robert, leaning over, glanced at the contents of it. Not having time to read it carefully, he could only hurriedly cast his eye down the page. The following sentences were all he could gather:—

"As I formed a hasty opinion, which has not been borne out by experience."

Again—

"My opinion of my nephews is utterly changed."

Again—

"Can see through him. He is not what he seems."

And—

"Revise my will entirely. This day week, therefore."

The latter was directed to "Mark Grappet, _____."

The names of Laurence and Robert were often and confusedly visible on the page, but he did not look at them particularly, as he had no doubt as to their relative positions in the old man's estimation. He was again composedly sitting in his chair, seemingly buried in the book, when Sir Childe entered the room. He, of course, suspecting nothing of what had happened, sealed the letter, and despatched it by a servant, and then telling his nephew that he wished to take a solitary ride, again left the room.

"And a curse go with you," cried Robert, when he had gone, and the clatter of his horse's feet over the stone-paved courtyard had reached his ears; "and a curse go with you," he repeated, the smothered passion that had boiled within him since his glance at the letter breaking forth in all its fury. "What have I been playing the sneak for all this time? To be outstripped in the race

for his favour by my cousin, who is too dull to see what he might gain by rivalling me in art."

About twelve o'clock that night, Sir Childe Hallet retired to his bed-chamber. This was a spacious room. The walls were draped with dark tapestry, and the broad low bed was furnished with heavy, gloomy, but rich hangings. A soft carpet covered the floor, and furniture of a massive and expensive kind was placed in the neatest manner about the room. No light elegant chairs, japanned tables, delicate vases, mirrors buried in beautiful gilding, or articles of virtu that a breath would blow away were there; but solid, antique, richly-carved furniture, rejoicing in sober, but yet bright polish was disposed with taste about that altogether sombre chamber. A couple of short wax candles filled it with a subdued light, while a merry fire added its quota of cheerfulness. Sir Childe stayed long at his table before he retired to rest; but when at length he did so the heavy but regular and measured breathing soon told that he was asleep.

The night wore on—the tapers burnt out, and the fire waxed low, a subdued light filled the room, and Sir Childe Hallet slept on. The hall was wrapped in slumber. From its topmost chamber in the little bell-tower to the gloomy cellars and vaults beneath silence kept solitary watch. There is ever something grand and almost awful in the gloom and shadowyness of night. The heavy darkness that sits everywhere brooding, and melancholy, and dull, fills the mind with strange and unbidden thoughts. Above all, the night watcher feels this. The consciousness of being at that hour almost alone in the world of the quick and conscious steals over the soul, and surrounds it with phantom crowds of shadowy, undefined, and shapeless ideas. Surrounding objects, mute and unobtruding in the light of day, seem, when they are the solitary companions of your vigil, to assume life and being, and each to tell its tale, full of meaning and experience. Faces long forgotten and voices long unheard make themselves visible and audible in the gloom. The very silence seems to speak. It is then that memory exerts her strongest influence upon the mind. Do what you will, strive as you may to turn your thoughts into other channels, pale and indistinct visions of things past float into your presence, and you see clearly without the agency of the eye, and hear sounds of which your organic senses are not cognisant. The recollection of a face will steal under the closed lids, and the memory of a voice needs not the ear to be alive and ready.

Such or something similar to such, must have been the feelings of him who is standing alone in the outer chamber of Sir Childe Hallet's sleeping apartment. Many hours has he stood there. There is no light in the room save that shed by the winter moon as she takes her nightly march along the skies, peering down upon the earth, as if to search into its mysteries and look upon what is taking place among the beings that inhabit it.

What is the purpose of the solitary watcher you cannot tell. That it is sinister there is not much doubt, for he has several times gone to the door of the baronet's room and listened. He does so now—he puts his ear to the key-hole and remains motionless. The heavy breathing tells that Sir Childe Hallet is asleep.

Now was his purpose told. He put his hand into his bosom and drew forth a stout-handled, short-bladed, double-edged, but pointed knife. The steel glimmered in the moonbeams as he raised it to the light and passed his finger over its edge, and then listened again.

Apparently satisfied, he prepared cautiously to open Sir Childe's bedroom door. As he was about to do it, a movement and creaking of the bed frame caught his ear, and he desisted.

Many a man would have, by thus being forced to put off the execution of his purpose for even a moment or two, been involuntarily visited by reflections which might have saved his soul from the ponderous weight of guilt now about to roll upon it; but Robert Hallet made no struggle against the bad promptings of his heart, and but waited till all should relapse into the same heavy silence that reigned before, to proceed with his crime.

He listened again for some moments, scarcely drawing a breath. No sound broke the stillness of the night. Summoning all his resolution, therefore, he noiselessly opened the door and looked in. The fire was almost extinct, the lights had burnt away, and the window of the baronet's chamber was nearly out of the influence of the moonbeams, and only one long yellow streak of her light lay across the toilet table, and reposed slantingly on the bed. Sir Childe lay on his back. The dingy curtain veiled the couch in gloom, save where that solitary ray fell, one of the baronet's hands lay in its light, the other was thrown above his head. A very slight breathing proceeded from the sleeper, and Robert, closing the door gently behind him, bolted it, and advanced with steady but cautious footsteps to the bedside. He compressed his lips and bent down over the old man. No motion save the gentle heave and swell of his bosom disturbed the coverlet, as he lay in his calm sleep, little dreaming that death, in the shape of his best-beloved nephew, stood over him.

Robert mused an instant and then placed his left hand firmly but cautiously on the bed, raised the right as high as possible in the air with the dagger glistening in it, shook and poised it for an instant, as an eagle balances itself on the wing before it darts upon its prey, and then brought it down on the aged man's breast with all the full vigour of his powerful arm. He had calculated the blow but too truly. A struggling collapsing motion for a second or so convulsed his frame, and the sleeper lay dead.

And now, when Robert had returned unheard and unnoticed by any one to the security of his own bedchamber, what had he achieved? Setting aside the moral guilt of his crime, and the probability of detection and punishment among men—not throwing the inevitable retribution to come upon him in another world into the balance—had he bettered his prospects, even in a pecuniary point of view? He had prevented the old man from altering his will, and comforted himself with the belief that he had cleverly outwitted his younger cousin, and secured to himself all the valuable estate of Plumstock.

"As for that paltry money-box," said he to himself, "I might, perhaps, with a little ingenuity, contrive to out-do him concerning that also. But he isn't a bad fellow, and I won't try to deprive him of it. I daresay it is a respectable sum to set him afloat again in the world, but not worth my spending any trouble on it."

Poor fool! Puffed up with pride at being able to consider himself sole lord and master of Plumstock, he had grown quite magnanimous, and declined attempting any other act of fraud to injure his cousin.

Now, as we have said, part of the estate was to pass into other hands at Sir Childe's death. Robert's portion was now worth about three thousand a year, while Laurence's income would amount to no less than twice that sum. Therefore it may easily be seen whether he had bettered or deteriorated his worldly condition by the committal of the dark crime I have described.

Great was the dismay at Plumstock Hall when next morning Sir Childe Hallet was found dead in his bed with the gaping wound in his breast. Many were the searches, many the inquiries, and still more numerous the conjectures as to the perpetrator of the deed. None, however, suspected the real criminal in the least, nor did he himself, as such persons usually do, attempt to fix on any one else as the author of the crime, but contented himself with looking extremely horror-stricken when made acquainted with the fact, and informing every one of the extreme love he bore his uncle, and of his perplexity concerning the person who had committed the deed. Laurence, who could never blind himself to his cousin's character, many and many times when he was least prepared for and least conscious of it cast searching and scrutinising glances, not unmingled with severity, at him, but always failed to detect the remotest shadow of anything like confusion or cowering in the expression of his face. At length he was satisfied that whatever his own opinions might have been, they were groundless, and feeling remorse of conscience bitterly in his heart for ever having conceived them, was convinced that some one of the many people

employed at the hall was the real criminal, though, as no robbery had been committed, this supposition was hardly probable. No one, and no one's conduct seemed suspicious. The affair, therefore, appeared likely to remain an inscrutable mystery to the end of time.

When the agitation caused by this occurrence had somewhat subsided, the baronet's will, legally signed, sealed, and attested, was produced and read by Mark Grappet, in full council and assembly. Robert feigned great surprise on discovering that he had been named heir to all the disposable portions of the Plumstock estate. The circumstance, however, at the time caused many scrutinising glances to be bent upon his face. His look, however, betrayed him not, and remained unaltered. Each, therefore, felt ashamed of ever having, as it were, for an instant seen the suspicious beleaguering his own mind, and not having spurned it off at the instant as unworthy of being received.

When, however, the iron chest came to be inquired for, it was found that the old man had neglected to leave any memorandum of the place of its deposit with the description of it, and never had communicated the information to any living soul. Laborious and untiring search was made in all the known recesses and nooks in the mansion, but with no avail. It had been secured in one of the hidden places of the hall, and notwithstanding all the diligent investigations entered into, remained unfound. Laurence by degrees relinquished all hope of ever possessing the money left him by his uncle; while Robert discovered to his infinite chagrin that the estates he had so greatly coveted were not worth quite half what he had expected,—still they were valuable, and enabled him to live in ease and comparative luxury. It was not his disposition to begrudge letting his cousin remain and live as long as he pleased at his expense. In fact, he invited him to remain for his life time. Laurence accepted the offer, proposing to stay with him for a year or so, until he could again start fairly in the world. Nine months passed away. The two cousins still lived together. The crime he had committed seemed to weigh but lightly on Robert's heart, and if his conscience ever spoke a word to him, he would drown the voice in the wine-goblet, or stifle it amid songs, and merriment, and feasting. Gradually the recollection of it almost faded from his mind, though now and then the face of his murdered uncle would look at him while he slept, or cross his path as he walked along the corridor he traversed that night when proceeding to do his projected crime; yet these visitations were few and far between, and if any man had ever a pretension to call himself happy after such a thing as he had done, Robert Hallet might have been chosen as that man.

But one night while the elder cousin and a choice party of "friends" were carousing and making merry in the ample dining-room of Plumstock Hall, Laurence walked forth to enjoy the coolness and freshness of the air, and crossing the fields sat down in a small grove about a mile-and-a-half distant, on the trunk of a fallen tree. He remained here may be for an hour, when suddenly, without giving any previous warning of its approach, a violent storm of wind and rain came on, which soon increased in fury, until it blew a perfect hurricane. A large forest lay on his right hand, and over this the wind swept, bowing it down like a corn field; while ever and anon a loud crash told of the ruin of some ancient oak or towering beech tree. Many a cottage was unroofed, and the rough tiles and thatch were whirled and scattered away as so many leaves. The clattering of falling chimneys, the rushing of a swollen torrent that, coursing and rattling through the fields, had borne away the little wooden bridge that spanned it; the loud voice of the wind sighing in the grass, and crying out of the forest; and the heavy and incessant pattering of the rain, were the only sounds that rose upon the night-air. To the left, amid an unbroken sweep of parks, low woods, and cultivated grounds, dotted here and there with the villas and country residences of the gentry, Plumstock Hall, eminent among the rest, its huge jagged outline broken by many chimneys and gable ends, rose distinctly defined against the dull sky of winter. Suddenly, when within a quarter of a mile of it, Laurence, as he pushed hastily along

the pathway over the fields, distinctly saw the mighty building nod, if I may so speak, to the wind, and in an instant after come crashing and crumbling to the ground in one tremendous mass of destruction. Astonishment and terror rooted him to the spot as he saw the ancient mansion melting, as it were, beneath the breath of the hurricane.

The venerable building continued falling and crumbling away, the chimneys flying over the fields, and the furniture of the chambers rolling, and tumbling, and crashing down with detached masses of bricks, stones, and rafters, all in one conglomeration of destruction.

Just as Laurence breathlessly approached the scene of desolation a part of the wall standing in the left wing fell, and something came down with a great noise and jingling, in the field. He involuntarily turned to see what it was, and the long-sought iron chest, bound with glittering brass, met his eye. He, however, paid no attention to it at that moment, but hastened to ascertain whether his cousin and his friends were safe. Most of the inmates of the house had been apprised of danger by a strange rumbling sound at the top of the building, and had rushed forth in time to save themselves. But Robert had not escaped so well; he, with two of his companions, had been struck and miserably crushed by the falling stones.

When Laurence found him he was lying in the last faintness of approaching death, surrounded by servants.

"Laurence," said he, as his cousin stooped by his side, "Laurence, this is the judgment of Heaven on me for that——"

"How! for what?"

"For murdering my uncle. Yes, Laurence, yes, I did it," he answered with a faint and smothered voice, and died.

Our story is told.

There is no necessity for describing the sensation caused by this announcement; suffice it to explain that the iron chest had been built up in a thick wall, which had stood when nearly all the rest had fallen. Many and many were the years that Laurence lived, enjoying the wealth left him by his murdered uncle, in a stately mansion built on the ruins of Plumstock Hall.

THE HIGHLAND BIVOUAC OF 1845.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HIGHLAND SPORTS AND HIGHLAND QUARTERS."

CHAPTER II.

BUT we have now passed the fine cascades of the Teith running from Loch Lubnaig, and have entered the romantic pass of Lennie, through the Grampians. There are few passes in the Highlands more beautiful, none more variedly and richly wooded; and as we halted to admire the wild scenery, the mind wandered far away in comparison to those Biscayan scenes where Mina and his guerilla troops had caused death and dismay to the legions of France. Leaving this almost solemn pass, our britska was whirled over the bridge of Killmahog, a name more pleasing to an English butcher than to ears which then listened to rushing mountain torrents. Kill-me-a-hog, however, reminded us that mid-day had passed an hour since; moreover Loch Van-a-choir, the lake of the Fair Valley, was near at hand—and what scene more fair and calm, near which to form our intended bivouac? A few clouds now hung on the hitherto clear blue vault of heaven, causing the heat to strike less intensely across the vale, and make the picture more calm and solemn. Ben Ledi, shadowed in its dark blue mantle, stood scowling on the Pass of Lennie; the waters from the

mountains hurried downwards to join the lake and refresh the air; and soon the hazel plantations which bordered the lake of the White or Fair Valley, in which the tall corn waved, became more narrow, and proceeding rapidly we soon halted at a sequestered spot, within a stone's cast of the lake, made as for the resort of a gipsy encampment. Sheltered by the hazel trees, we soon unharnessed, with the aid of the post-boy, our trusty steeds, and allowed them to pick up the fresh herb, a good supply of corn being provided for their dessert, with refreshing water at hand; this, the first benevolent duty of travellers, over, we forced our way through the thick underwood, and soon selected a truly delicious dining apartment, amid the rocks, and secluded by the trees, on the very margin of Loch Vennachar. Who reading this name does not recal the beautiful poem of the Lady of the Lake, wherein the whole of the scenes on which we then looked are so beautifully and to the life described?—

" Few were the stragglers following far,
That reached the Lake of Vennachar."

But we must forget for a moment the beauties of nature, and attend to the calls of a ravenous appetite. Once more the carriage was robbed of every cushion—fires were kindled among the rocks—potatoes washed in the waters of the lake—not a very romantic occupation, nevertheless doing the amateur cook is a very pleasing pastime, and on this occasion we concocted a stew, which had it not been for the damnable midges, which in the Highlands are given to feed luxuriously on the faces, hands, and necks of fair ladies and dark gentlemen who intrude on their domains, we verily believe our gastronomic talent would have surpassed those of the enthusiastic individual who finished his career on a rapier for want of a fish. Nevertheless, in spite of the midges, we stirred and tasted the stew, poured in now a little Reading sauce, now a little Worcester, while they continued to stir us with a vengeance and taste us in spite of ourselves. But the Reading and Worcester were not all the ingredients that fell therein; yet every morsel was eaten and pronounced marvellously *appetisant*, for we kept the fact to ourselves that at least a pint of sand from the shores of Loch Vennachar had assisted in thickening the gravy. We had in those bright days a merry Highland terrier, as joyous and active a little animal as ever was pupped beyond the Border. This little fellow was a great favourite with all who saw him, and as he was our constant companion, and in fact, a great addition to any party, he had been permitted to accompany us—now running by the carriage-side, now chasing mountain sheep, and frightening all the ducks on the road side out of their lives; then, fatigued, resting his little head on the lap of one of the fair ladies—for dogs have good taste in these matters as well as man—or sitting perched up between us on the rumble, in silent admiration of all with life he saw. He had, however, one trick, of which when once learned it was impossible to break him; how or where he had acquired it, it is impossible to explain, and matters little—save that he had not at the same time been taught to practise it in proper season. It was simply that of picking up a stone and laying it at the feet of any person kindly disposed to give him a run on land or a jump into the water to seek it—when, how, or where, little cared he. The day was hot—the water of the lake calm and delightful, two or three refreshing baths had already been afforded him. The party—at least, most of them—had wandered from the spot in search of the picturesque, while he for some brief time sat watching his master's culinary labours—impatient of delay, he at length found a round pebble, and laid it at our feet. Intent on our object of serving a most savoury mess, the high flavour of which began to waft its aroma towards Ben Ledi, we paid little or no attention to his wishes. These, however, he soon apprised us he intended should be gratified; and with an earnest intent to this effect, in pushing the pebble towards us, he cast into the high-flavoured concoction at least half a pint of sand, which pleasing addition he repeated ere we had time to chastise him. We had only one course to pursue, that of stirring a few additional stirs, and then serving to our friends that which we other-

wise would willingly have enjoyed ourselves; they were satisfied even to repletion—pronounced it delicious, and of course gave us the credit of depriving ourselves for their benefit—but a feast in the open air after a long day's ramble, weather being fair, and locality being beautiful, causes an appetite to the least of eaters, which no heated room, however delightful—no society, however charming—no repast, however suited to the senses, can ever call forth; and on such occasions a sprinkling of sand answers all the purposes of a dash of cayenne, or any other seasoning of the highest order. Dinner being over, as on the border of Loch Earn, we took our time of repose, the smokers, among whom we numbered, sought a fitting divan among the rocks; while the rest of the party, scattered in different directions, either taking a siesta or in other amusements, having fully refreshed the body allowed the mind to dwell on nature's beauties, with which on all sides we were surrounded—not, in our humble estimation, that Loch Vennachar bears comparison in boldness or beauty to Loch Earn or those more lovely lakes we were slothfully approaching. Sir Walter Scott, however, with his bright imagination has nevertheless thrown around it a halo of interest which makes all things, to a mind open to receive such, appear to advantage.

But the dark and leaden clouds which now hang on the craggy pinnacle of the hill of God, speak of a change of weather—the afternoon advances, and we have still some leagues ere we reach our quarters for the night at the small hotel built at the mouth of the Trossachs for the accommodation of tourists; moreover, we were led to believe that the route which lay before us was one of unsurpassing beauty not to be lost sight of by the coming shades of evening, or dimmed and saddened by the approaching storm, which, amid these Highlands comes frequently unexpected and unprepared for, deluging the earth and all who are unwarily exposed to it, so we quickly gathered up the fragments of our outdoor meal, packed away the pans and kettles, replaced the cushions, and having assisted our most civil, but most unlightened charioteer to harness in his cattle, we were soon fairly under weigh again;

"And nearer was the copse-wood grey
That waned and wept on Loch Achray,
And mingled with the pine trees blue
On the bold cliffs of Ben Venue."

As an enthusiastic lover of fine scenery, we had looked forward with no common anticipations of pleasure to the four last leagues of this day's ramble. Whatever were those anticipations, however, we must frankly admit they were more than realised as each yard opened new features in the picture more and more to be admired, and the sun, now hidden by the gathering clouds, now breaking forth again in splendour, produced an effect of light and shade far more pleasing to the beholder than had the hoped-for clearness of the heavens continued throughout the day. Bidding adieu to Loch Vennachar and the fair valley from which it takes its name, we now proceeded through a cluster of small huts, and mounted a very steep, rough road cut from the mountain side, winding on through labyrinths and crags intermixed with patches of verdure, bogs, rushes, and shady coppice, with mountain rivulets rushing from all quarters; a road less formed for easy motion of wheels, and consequently less agreeable to ride over, yet more beauteous in variety we scarcely ever beheld—approaching the Glen of Finglass with the river issuing thence we crossed a small bridge, the Bridge of Turk—

"And when the brigg of Turk was won
The headmost horseman rode alone"—

truly a strange but beautiful and impracticable hunting country; though the quarry was well nigh run into, ere the sparkling eyes of the fair Ellen gave welcome in the distance. As we entered this part of the pass—for pass it may be termed—strange were the sensations which crowded on the mind; on the right a few scattered shielings, the river roaring through the deep glen (for there had

recently been much rain, and darkened by the shadows of the high towering crags of the forest of Glen Finglass, covered with wood. The river, though loudly heard, was scarcely to be seen, so dense was the foliage—here the lofty pine towering above the thick hazel, varied by the silvery birch and mountain ash bending over the broken flood which rushed towards the bridge. To the left Loch Achray, closely surrounded by hills of every shape and hue, shadowing its cobalt waters. Hence the beauty, we may fairly add the sublimity, of the scene by the borders of Loch Achray, to the very entrance of the foot of Loch Katrine—or more properly written Loch Cathrine—is beyond the power of pen to describe or pencil to delineate, nothing but the eye can truly convey to the mind such scenery. Well may this beauteous lake be termed Loch-a-chravy, or the lake of the Field of Devotion, for never have we witnessed a spot more calculated to call the mind of man from thoughts of the world, the city's din, the struggles of life, to his God in thankfulness that he in his bounty has made such loveliness for man's delight.

On quitting the narrow road which winds, or rather twists under the rocks by the side of Loch Achray, we passed on amongst various shaped crags covered with wood, and rended chasms, deep and dark on every side. No trace of man or living thing was seen; every sound reverberated from rock to rock as if flying through the labyrinth to announce the approach of unhallowed steps. Our hearts were raised in awe to Heaven's solemnity. All was echo; the song of the bird, the sound of the foot of an animal, the rustling of the wind among the trees, the gush of a torrent, or the fall of a pebble resounded through the solemn pass as through a ruined cloister. The gloom hung heavier and heavier on the mountain; now a large drop of heated rain fell from the sky, a slight rumbling sound, the horses pricked their ears, the ladies feared for their bonnets; faster and faster fell the heavy raindrops, louder pealed the thunder, echoing through a hundred hills—flash, flash, the lightning flew across the glen. The morning scene had shifted; then so fair, so calm, so cloudless; now so gloomy yet so grand; the very weather for once seemed to have prepared itself for our enthusiasm. While gliding through treeless moors, and feasting under the canopy of heaven, all was fair, and warm, and dry, over head and under foot; but the moment we entered the wild pass we have thus briefly endeavoured to describe, we were treated to a thousand freaks of most awful grandeur; and although choice would unquestionably not induce us to select such an astonishing atmospheric termination to a pleasant excursion, we must express our thankfulness that the deluge poured on our devoted heads at a moment when shelter was near at hand, and amid scenes of all others made more interesting by such an event. But our carriage now stands before the door of the little Highland Posada, in a spot of exceeding beauty, hard by the entrance to the Trossachs; its outward appearance speaks of homely comfort and rural simplicity. We rest there to-night, to-morrow we will tell you of Helen's Isle; and having looked on the placid lake from the heathered sides of Ben Venue, will endeavour to paint you a rough but truthful portrait of its loveliness. The thunder still groans in the distance, but the battle of nature is fought, and the mighty legions are retiring. The dark clouds roll onwards from north to west, and the air is lighter, almost chilly among these Highland mountains; moreover, the gentler sex, fatigued, but not weary of the day's pleasure, yet somewhat unnerved by the last hour's thunder and deluge, are handed from the carriage. Beware how you step; the ground, but recently parched by the hot sun, is now saturated. Be careful; such fairy feet are rarely seen within the threshold of a Highland inn. We were ushered into a tolerable-sized parlour, decently clean and commodious, nothing more; the bivouac among the rocks was a palace in comparison. Our horses were cared for, our bed-rooms selected, or rather secured, these were clean, but neither airy nor commodious, the view from the windows, however, spoke for itself, and we all felt disposed to be well pleased. The dust of the morning drive was soon washed away, and dry shoes replaced the muddy boots occasioned by the thunder storm. Tea, and what not was ordered, and we all

evinced the full intention of passing the evening as we had passed the day. The merry joke went round, the cheerful laugh was heard, and anticipations of the morrow made the present doubly joyous. The board, however, had scarcely been spread for our evening's meal, ere another vehicle, in the shape of a hired open phaeton, drove to the door, from which alighted four individuals; the one a thick-set, vulgar-looking man, dressed evidently in one of Moses and Son's shooting jackets, and a pair of tartan trowsers, his head being covered with a Glengarry bonnet; yet no Highlander was he, but an unmistakable individual fresh from Whitechapel, who, Heaven knows how or wherefore, thus unexpectedly found himself in the midst of all most beautiful in Scottish scenery. He was followed by a lanky youth, some sixteen years of age; the two with difficulty handing out, with care, a portly over-dressed dame, weighing some sixteen stone of human flesh, the mother, doubtless, of a quiet, pretty-looking young woman, whom, as she repeatedly addressed as her dear love Jane, we presume to have been her daughter. Having witnessed the unloading of the vehicle, and wondered why such persons should travel so far to witness sights for the beauties of which they cared not one jot—save, perhaps, the young lady, who had been at a London boarding-school, and was therefore well read in Scott and Burns, we resumed our seat, and prepared to play our part at the tea table—when, lo! the door opened, and the whole party entering, relieved themselves from all unnecessary garments; while the gentleman, or leader of the tourists, deliberately rang the bell, and loudly declaring he was famished among these savage hills, and positively had eaten nothing palatable since he crossed the Border, immediately ordered that everything in the house might be produced. Had he said he had smelt nothing but whiskey there would have been some truth in his assertion, as even in this truly lovely spot, where honeysuckles hung in flowery clusters without the windows, the very room within was scented with it.

But it was now full time that we should express our annoyance at that which we naturally surmised was a rude and unmannerly intrusion; we looked at one another—disgust and astonishment were vividly depicted on the faces of all—yet no one spoke. Having, however, hitherto been one of the active leaders of the party, we felt it high time that we should hint that we had already secured the apartment. This we did, as mildly and courteously as circumstances would permit; but we were very briefly undeceived as to the hopes of retaining our privacy, as were we with the pleasures we had expected around the social board.

"No offence, no offence whatever, gentlemen," said the sturdy little intruder. "This is a public room—so said the landlady; them who pays has the right of entry, and right is might with Londoners, as all the world over. First come, how ever, first served—that's all fair and just—so drink your tea, ladies. Doubtless you've dined, aye? I have not. Come, Jane, my dear, here is the estables—cold beef, aye! Any pickles in this outlandish place, aye, my good lassie? Cold fowl, Jane, here's for you—come, my boy, tackle the beef. Young woman, bring porter, ale, everything your house affords, and just half a glass of brandy to keep out the mountain hair I have been inhaling from the lake this last hour."

This was really too much. Hitherto all had been *couleur de rose*, now our quiet evening was totally upset by the association of this noisy vulgar tourist, who for an hour had been "hinbailing" the "hair" of the mountain from the lake. Would that he had been soaking in it, or on the mountains! We hastened out to find the landlady—for host there was none—but from her we only received a corroboration of his assertions. The room was not only a public one, but the only one, and truly his right was might. Alternative we had none; conversation on private matters or merriment was at an end, and heartily we wished our hungry friend had never left his home in the capital to wander amid scenes he cared not for. The ladies retired to their bed-rooms, while the gentlemen, after a stroll and a cigar, were condemned to follow their

example. We have mentioned these facts merely to warn those who visit Loch Cathrine as to the accommodation they may expect; and thus far even we were in a measure fortunate, for at periods the house is literally crammed from parlour to garret. Why, it will be asked, is not additional accommodation provided at a spot where, during the summer, thousands and tens of thousands are known to congregate? The only answer we can give is that which has been given to us, and which we believe to be the fact—simply, that the whole property belongs to the Marquis of Breadalbane, and he is not desirous, for reasons best known to himself, and with which we have no right to interfere, that the locality should be overrun with strangers, who, in admiration of the splendid scenery within reach on all sides, would doubtless in hundreds make it their head-quarters, and many among them, not satisfied with sight-seeing, might be disposed to sport over the hills, which abound with game.

On throwing open our bed-room window on the following morning, the first object we beheld was our hungry friend of the evening previous, looking, as Sidney Smith once quaintly observed, like a man who had been in hot water all his life, but had never come therefrom the cleaner. There he stood, fretting and fuming by the side of his hired vehicle, to which we gladly observed the horses were harnessed ready for starting; and the carpet-bags, cloaks, &c., being at length arranged to his satisfaction, the party took their seats, and away they went in the direction from which they had come. On inquiring of our landlady for what object such visitors made her house their resting-place, inasmuch as the route only led to Loch Cathrine, we were informed that the party in question had been up early, and had walked, previous to breakfasting, to a neighbouring height, from which having a good view of the lakes, they had remained five minutes, and then returned to breakfast, which had taken them a full hour. Thus, having passed moments in looking on so exquisite a scene, and hours in gastronomic indulgence, tourists like these make a rapid journey through the half of Europe, and while they gain little knowledge themselves they deceive their friends.

But the morning now advances, and we had determined, during the long summer's day, to revel amid the beauties of nature which on all sides surround Loch Cathrine and the Trossachs, selecting for this, our third day's bivouac, that lovely little isle—

“Where Helen's hand had taught to twine
The Idæan vine,
The clematis, the favoured flower
Which boasts the name of virgin bower,
And every hardy plant could bear
Loch Cathrine's keen and searching air.”

For this purpose breakfast being amply discussed in the room to which we had been first introduced, without the presence of strangers to interfere with our hilarity; and having made some little addition to our commissariat, which still held out tolerably, with the exception of fresh bread—which, by the by, must be a luxury unheard of at the Trossachs, excepting during the few butterfly months of the year, during which strangers from every part of Europe hasten to view scenes which in their peculiar nature of beauty and interest cannot be surpassed. When we first caught a glance of Loch Cathrine, we must admit the fulness of our astonishment and delight; a faint ray of sun was at the moment penetrating through the mist, for unfortunately the morning was anything but that we should have desired. We have, however, thank God, a hopeful mind, and whether it be the weather or our own fortunes which for the season lower, we invariably hope for the best, and were not unsatisfied by the effect of its brightness, which glancing through the fog, which still clung to the surrounding mountains and crags, tinged the thick woods which hung on their sides, gleaming over the beautiful islands on the lake. We had secured a boat, and having walked through the sequestered and wooded road leading to the eastern end of the lake; the whole scene in calmness

and charm at once opened to view. This is probably the spot which, of all others, impresses on the mind the best effect in regard to Loch Cathrine, though unquestionably neither the best to view its splendour, nor the exciting interest of the scenery by which it is surrounded. There while we assisted in handing our fair companions to the boat, in which two powerful Highlanders had already seated themselves to row us to all the interesting parts of the lake; we could not resist dwelling for a few moments to gaze on the unusual placidity of the waters, which appeared like a sheet of glass, on which the several wooded little islands seemed fixed as sylvan toys. For hours thus we glided o'er the waters till the increased thickness of the atmosphere led us to fear that if we lingered too long on the bosom of the lake, we might lose many of the beauties to be seen from its mountains' sides. With this intent on Fair Helen's Isle we landed one of our companions whose delicate health was not exactly suited for a heated ramble; to his charge were also given what are justly denominated "the prog baskets," but which vulgar appellation Loch Cathrine's keen and searching air would very soon cause to be the cream of elegance. He was, moreover, requested to find a fitting place whereon to pitch our bivouac, of course as near as possible to that identical spot where James of Scotland had sought refuge. We then landed on the most beautiful sandy shore on the northern side of the lake we ever beheld; nothing could be finer and softer than that sand, more clear and calm than those waters—

"The summer's dawn-reflected hue
To purple changed Loch Cathrine blue,
Mildly and soft the western breeze
First kissed the lake, just stirred the trees,
And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
Trembled but dimpled not for joy,
The mountain shadows on her breast
Were neither broken o'er at rest."

Lady of the Lake.

Up the sides of these mountains we cheerfully wandered, though the day was dull and oppressive to a degree, by steps cut out in the crags to a high point hanging over the lake, from which we obtained a fine view of the whole surface, which lies nearly from west to east.

The view from this favoured spot to the foot of the lake towards the east embraces the whole of the wooded islands, and is unquestionably beautiful; while that may be truly termed sublime where the lake, pouring into a river, rushes onward through the splendid wooded pass termed the Trossachs once more to join the waters of Loch-a-chravy.

True was our disappointment that the still lowering mists should have prevented the entire development of Stuic-a-chroin or the Peak of Rutting, which, only partially revealed to us, formed the southern boundary or grand guard to the lake, beyond which imagination told us of Loch Chroin and Choir-a-chroin the valley of Rutting in the distance. Having lingered some time on this spot we once more descended to our boat, and visited the Den of the Ghost, we rowed under the solid rock, which rises two hundred feet perpendicularly above the level of the lake, as also to every spot most worthy of attention, then hastened on to the beautiful little island whereon it was our full intention to pass the remaining hours of daylight. During our absence a most beautiful and secluded spot had been selected for our bivouac, and all hands were once more employed in providing for the inward man those enjoyments which nature had provided for our eyes. Again the dry wood rattled and flamed beneath the potato cauldron, again the savoury stew sent forth its fumes—where fumes of cookery, perchance, had ne'er been raised—into the clear air; but the midges! Heavens! how ravenous they were, how they feasted on our faces and hands! Truly the midges of Helen's Isle beat all other midges in their greediness; moreover, when they swarm as they did then, the coming storm is not far in the distance—a fact which the denseness of the atmosphere and the hanging mists which now actually spread o'er the waters of the lake

too truly depicted. Nevertheless, being fully alive to the fickleness of the weather in the western Highlands we had provided ourselves with abundant cloaks, as also umbrellas in case of need, the advantage of which was soon made evident, for scarcely had we seated ourselves round a rough yet bountifully supplied board beneath the clustering islet trees, than a small drizzling dreary rain, accompanied with an unmistakeably Scotch mist pronounced our out-door pleasures at an end. The ladies of the party, however, were none of the dissatisfied class, and not easily frightened by a little damping, and the males were perfectly satisfied to abide the consequences, so we stuck to our colours; and a strange picture would any one have beheld who chanced to drop from the clouds on Helen's Isle. Surrounded by thick copse wood on a small platform sat a joyous party of six, near at hand the dry pine wood fires still crackled, on one of which the potato saucepan boiled in order to keep the bursting fruit heated till the last moment; from the other a savoury steam arose, which one of the party was dealing out with a large spoon to those more seriously inclined; cold pies, tongues, and chickens, and other excellencies for pic-nic consumption were placed here and there on a clean damask table-cloth which covered the mossy turf. The ladies, as also one of the gentlemen, who was cutting up a well-seasoned veal pie, had umbrellas over their heads, while the brilliant-eyed little terrier sat on his hind legs watching for the many tit bits which may chance to fall to his lot. In good truth there was no want of plenty, or even luxury in this fair spot. But the evening was fated to be a damper—to prevent the ill effect of the drizzle and the mist, we mixed our remaining bottle of sherry with two of Scotch ale, as a last resource to keep out the mist, keep away the midges, and keep up our own spirits. The lowering mists hung so thickly o'er the lake that all was hidden in obscurity, and we were soon compelled to retreat to the little inn, where before a large pine wood and peat fire we soon forgot the miseries without. Thus hence we travelled from Perth to Loch Cathrine. Should these simple details be found sufficiently agreeable we may hope to find those who will accompany us further.

TOM TIMKINS'S PIPE.

A TALE OF THE TIMES.

By E. L. BLANCHARD.

It would have done your heart good to have known Tom Timkins. If you had wanted to impress the inhabitants of another planet with an exalted notion of mundane humanity, Tom would have been the very man you would have been proud to have packed up in a small parcel and sent as a specimen. You could have desired no better pattern of a thoroughly good-natured mortal, and in the manufacture of such would gladly have made any allowance by taking a quantity. He was not one of your uncertain fellows, with a temper like an April day, that varied with every moment, and was only sunny when there was no cloud to be seen, not he—his fancy, like a porpoise, gambolled most in a storm, and the more dark and sombre it grew around him the brighter flashed his lightning sparks of good humour. "Ill luck to-day—better to-morrow," was Tom's treasured maxim; and if the logical deduction was not always correct, he did his best to make it so by having recourse to another axiom, which alleged with indisputable accuracy that when matters had come to the worst they were sure to mend. Tom, in fact, was an optimist of the first degree, and his happy enviable creed had been throughout his own life, and that of his father before him, the family belief "that whatever happens, happens for the best." Happy Tom!

Now the great source and secret of Tom's happiness was his pipe, a quaint, old-fashioned meerschaum, that was his constant companion on all occasions, and

with which he would not have parted for all that fabulous amount of coin supposed to be collectively comprised in the wealth of the Indies. The senior Timkins, who had in his early days made sundry wild voyages to various parts of the habitable globe, had brought it many years before from some unknown region in Germany; and when the senior Timkins departed on his final journey from earth, this family talisman had descended to Tom as his sole inheritance. Cocker himself would have been staggered at a computation of the many pounds of tobacco that had been successively consumed in its bowl, until its very surface had blushed into a sympathetic tawny red at the enormity it had committed; and as for the smoke that it had evolved in instalments of puffing, there would have been amply enough in the aggregate to have occasioned a total eclipse of the sun for the next century. Whenever Tom was in doubt, difficulty, or distress, he flew to his pipe for decision, extrication, and relief; and so great were its magical virtues that it naturally became a received opinion among his familiars that the old German meerschaum had something in it of supernatural origin, and that it must have been fabricated somewhat after the fashion of the bullets in *Der Freyschutz*. Tom generally smiled at the allusion when it was made in his presence, and struggled manfully to account for the solace he found as soon as sought by natural causes; but it was easy to perceive that these vague suspicions only made Tom fonder of his favourite than before, and that it was cherished afterwards more tenderly and tenaciously than ever.

But if Tom was thus such an inveterate lover of the Nicotian weed, it was not that he cared much for the mere ordinary brute indulgence of smoking—his whiffs were those of a philosopher, and he smoked after the manner of Coleridge and Carlyle, psychologically. His pipe was to him the type of contentment, of sociality, of that interchange of good-fellowship which he had endeavoured through life so assiduously to cultivate. It was with him the medium through which he *thought*, and the vapourous wreaths that issued from the bowl became thus the shadowy embodiment of so many distinct ideas. Nay, he had attained by constant practice such a habit of mingling fumigation with meditation, that the amber mouth-piece became at last endowed with the attributes of an oracle, and he studied its responses with the interest of a Delphic devotee. Whilst those around him were tossed upon the billows of popular controversy, and were agitated by the questions that arose from the constantly-changing currents of events, Tom was as cool and placid as a frozen lake, and kept his principles as fixed as a rock embedded in its depths. He believed in Providence and smoked his pipe.

Thus had Tom Timkins rattled merrily through thirty years of a life unchequered by any incident that made them vary from those of an ordinary mortal, when two events occurred that gave rise to much perplexity on the part of Tom, and created the necessity of this veracious chronicle being indited. To render these intelligible it will be necessary to enlighten the reader upon a few points connected with the early history of our hero, and this we shall strive to achieve with as much united levity and brevity as possible.

We have already adverted incidentally to Tom's father, and as this was the only relation Tom ever knew, and consequently the only member of the family to be introduced, we may be allowed a few preparatory explanations concerning the parent of the Timkins proper. According to what Tom had heard him reveal at various periods, and from the reminiscences of his own early youth, the original Timkins had been in the days of his maturity a pilot, and in that capacity had acquired some little emolument and more honours. From the dimensions of a rough pea coat, dotted with Brobdingnag buttons, that had been preserved as a family relic, it was manifestly apparent that the progenitor of our hero had been of fair proportions, and this supposition was further confirmed by the brawny limbs and athletic frame that distinguished the son. With the aid of a small legacy and his own thrifty habits, he had contrived to spend the close of his days in a small, but pretty village on the Kentish coast, where his chief delight was in smoking the old

meerscham in his cosy ingle nook and narrating stories of the sea to his son, until at last he sank contentedly into his grave, and left Tom in undisputed possession of a snug cottage and the old meerscham pipe previously referred to as the principal bequest. Tom, however, was not an idle consumer of the earth's produce without yielding to the earth something in return, and in all the pride of honest handicraft worked hard for his living. Not that he had any especial employment cut out for him, but being a kind of universal adept, willing and able to take anything that offered, he was rarely without the means of turning his industry and ingenuity to a remunerative account.

If Tom had never fallen in love before it was neither for want of temptation nor opportunity, for the prettiest lasses in the village had plentifully provided him with both. Manifold were the insinuating glances thrown out to him as hints that his attention in various quarters would be far from proving disagreeable; but in a discussion of the matter over his pipe Tom invariably found such good and efficient reasons for not availing himself of these privileges that he had been popularly set down as a hopeless bachelor, when his heart was at once attacked and captured, at a time when he was least prepared to offer resistance. Jane Brown—we might give her a more euphonious and less ordinary appellation, but we prefer adhering to plain facts, even at the expense of romance—Jane Brown was a little laughing brunette, whose disposition was the very counterpart of Tom's, and whose blythe and generous heart was a mirror which reflected the best and kindest emotions of humanity. There was a neat roadside inn near the summit of the hill, which led down to the village, and it was the landlord of this rustic hostel who had the honour of being the father of Jane Brown. As courtship, however interesting to the principal parties concerned, is after all a very trite story in description, we shall only say, that after many months of preparatory visits to the Roebuck, and much preliminary argument with his pipe, Tom Timkins ventured upon matrimony, and finally by the retirement of his father-in-law, succeeded to the position of host, together with the possession of all goods and appurtenances belonging to the Roebuck inn aforesaid.

This was *one* of the events of Tom's life, and a very pleasant event it was for both parties, but it was speedily followed by a second, of hardly so agreeable a nature. For nearly a twelvemonth before there had been some rumours of a railway coming close upon the village, if even it did not actually run quite through it; and some had gone so far as to state that a station had been decided upon. This was deemed such an unlikely occurrence that the peace of the locality had been but little disturbed by the intelligence, and even when the county paper had made some remarks upon the nature of the act for its formation as it received Parliamentary sanction, and when a farmer on his way to the neighbouring market town had further encountered a surveyor and his assistants with the unknown instruments of level and theodolite, even then there was a general infidelity entertained upon the subject. But at last the whole matter was placed beyond the possibility of dispute, and preparations were made to set about the work in earnest. One morning the villagers got up and found navigators who had risen before them, and descended there, none knew how, busily employed plying pickaxe and spade, and making a tunnel directly under the very hill where the Roebuck suspended its sign to invite the wearied traveller to rest and refreshment. Huge mounds of earth began to rise along the meadows, and clumsy carts, laden with formidable pyramids of chalk and flint, were seen passing to and fro all day long, cutting deep ruts into the soft daisied sward, and piling up the sides of an embankment as far as the eye could reach. Navigators, too, commenced a series of bibulous invasions upon Tom's stock of fermented beverages, and the startled villagers would cluster curiously round the porch of a summer's evening to see the laying down of those continuous rails which seemed to link them, as with a chain of iron, to the great metropolis far away. From that time the peaceful seclusion of the village appeared gone for ever, and when the first train came rattling down, with its fiery steed in front, and its long vapourous trail of curling steam behind, whisking along the em-

bankment, and under the hill, and again out of sight before one had time to look round ; people had begun to view the innovation as a matter of course, and returned to their homes just as if nothing had happened.

So far the Roebuck had derived some pecuniary advantages from the change, but Tom would gladly have surrendered all the prospective increase of profits for a return to the quiet undisturbed days of old. Strange faces began to appear in the parlour, and the old customers, growing shy of their new acquaintances, transferred their patronage to a tavern more remote from the vicinity of the rail. Tom, however, stood his ground manfully, and battled against these annoyances with all his accustomed good humour ; but his pipe was put into more frequent requisition than before, and he, more than once, resorted to it with the firm intention of considering the propriety of changing his place of abode. Several times had he and his pipe nearly made up their mind, but the ties of old associations clung round him, and a couple of rosy-cheeked urchins, which Mrs. Timkins had furnished as her contribution to the next census, materially interfered with the firmness of his decision.

Among the visitors to the parlour recently installed in the old walnut-tree chairs, where the first frequenters had nightly taken their seats by long-established prescription, there had been one brought down by the railway who made himself conspicuous among the rest by the stentorian capacity of his lungs and the violent tone of his political opinions. He was a short thickset man, with a sharp shrewd countenance, and a mass of long, black, wiry hair on his head that gave him, when excited, a peculiar aspect of ferocity. When present he would hear nobody speak but himself, and as his harangues were, for the most part, redolent of anything but the principles of universal harmony, Tom had to keep his pipe alight the whole time in order to hear with patience his terrible denunciations against all who were happier or richer than himself. What especial enactments Mr. Gruffey would have made had circumstances conspired to place him at the head of the government it was not easy to conjecture, but as he frequently delighted to observe he was not "a half-and-half man ; but a right down physical force advocate to the last stick, and no mistake about it"—it may be presumed that he entertained some peculiar notions eminently calculated to benefit the community.

"Yes, sir," exclaimed the agitator, energetically, one evening, as he and Tom were left alone to finish the discussion by themselves, "there is nothing like physical force"—and he thumped the table violently, to illustrate his assertion—"nothing like guns and pikes to carry the point you want. Every man should be his own soldier—every man should be his own policeman—every man should be his own House of Commons. What's the use of a government?—all sheer humbug! Bah!"

Tom mildly ventured to observe that though abuses had naturally crept into various institutions yet that such formed no proof the institutions themselves were positively useless.

"Pooh, pooh!" returned Mr. Gruffey, "you are a miserable serf—a wretched, ill-used, ground-down Englishman, without any of the rights that you ought to have, and I shall never rest content until you know it and feel it. The whole state of society is wrong, sir,—radically wrong—there is no such a thing as liberty in the present state of the law ; and what I contend for is, that every Englishman has a full and perfect right to do just what he likes. The tongue is all very well, mighty well—but if you want to carry your point you must not only be able to open your mouth, but you must show your teeth as well ;" and saying this Mr. Gruffey slapped his hat firmly on to his head with the air of one who had done the human state some service, and disappeared through the doorway to stir others up into the same way of thinking. But Tom filled another pipe to smoke over it, and was soon absorbed in a profound reverie.

Night after night did the agitator strive to thus make Tom Timkins a convert to his own view of the matter, and at last the unfortunate landlord, from having the necessity of these desperate resources continually impressed upon him, began at last to really consider himself as one suffering under grievous

wrongs. He smoked his pipe less than formerly, and walked about with a troubled and discontented spirit that formed a striking contrast to his former satisfied and joyous demeanour. He felt less interest in his own affairs, and more in those of other people, and then he found himself continually called upon to decide petty disputes and interfere with private bickerings; so that even his wife had little of his company, whilst the roadside inn exhibited all the symptoms of neglect. Gruffey, who turned out to be a discharged clerk, only recently elevated to the dignity of a delegate from the "*Upset-everything and don't-care-a-button-for-anybody-but-ourselves Association*"—was unremitting in his endeavours to fan Tom's spark of unhappiness into a consuming flame, and before many weeks had elapsed the change in Tom's circumstances became so manifest that it attracted the attention of the neighbours. He was found to be now always growling and grumbling, and ferreting out what he conceived to be terrible abuses in the appropriation of the parochial funds; and he then grew wonderfully expert at making speeches which generally turned upon the supposed existence of social evils and official malpractices that had really no foundation. Of course such a change in Tom's manners and pursuits exercised a very visible influence on his business and domestic circumstances. As Tom became more involved in these political meetings, of the precise object of which nobody entertained a very clear idea, his household affairs got more and more deranged, and at last his creditors stepped in, took all, and the next day a board was hung under the sign-post, intimating that the house was to be "Let or Sold." A week after, and Tom was a houseless wanderer.

Here was a fine opportunity for getting up an outcry against those who made laws for others, and Tom lost no time in taking advantage of it. He set himself up for a persecuted and injured man, one who had been singled out by society for destruction, and whose prosperity it was the interest of every man to crush. The liberal opinions entertained by Mr. Gruffey, and the laxity of social principles which he had laboured so successfully to instil into Tom's mind, had now their full effect upon the susceptible temperament of our hero. He deserted his wife and children; left them, with scarcely a mental struggle, to the tender mercies of the parish he had so unmercifully abused, and came up to the metropolis, ready to engage in any employment that promised the means of subsistence. Here he found many pursuing the same course that Gruffey had been continually upholding in the country. Some few, sincere in their convictions, and acting from integrity of purpose; others, with perverted talents, exercising them with the object of converting the services of misguided men to their own advantage; and the majority, utterly reckless, from a position chiefly caused by their own errors, anxious for any personal profit that they could get out of a general scramble with society. Into this association, of which Mr. Gruffey had been one of the eloquent missionaries, Tom entered with enthusiasm. For awhile the novelty and excitement of the scene engrossed his attention, but as these wore off he had recourse to a more violent stimulus, and now, for the first time in his life, taking to dram-drinking,—he made the lowest tap-rooms his constant haunt, and became a pot-house orator. What was at first an occasional spur to his brain next fastened itself upon him as a habit, and, finally, as a necessity. He lost every situation that he procured through the consequences of his dissipation, and at last was content to sponge upon the few, scarcely richer than himself, who had the means or inclination to gratify his propensity.

One night, when the rain was pouring down in a steadfast torrent, and the street was only animated by the rattling progress of a coach or cab, Tim Timkins, miserably clad, and half-intoxicated with the potations he had imbibed, was slowly returning over Blackfriars-bridge, when he stopped to lean upon the parapet, and look down on the dark plashing river rolling sluggishly beneath. He thought of the bright sunny streamlet that glanced through the glades of his native village, and the contrast it formed with the gloomy muddy tide on which he was gazing; and then he thought of his wife and children, that he had left behind, and the miserable lodging to which he had to return himself, and the utter hopelessness of retrieving his lost fortunes; and then, mad-

dened by the remembrance of associations thus evoked, and a contemplation of the prospect before him, he took a leap from the stone recess, and in another instant was struggling amid the gurgling ripples that closed above his head. One last gasp for breath—one final battle for existence, and then, with the bubbling water seething in his ears, he sank down—down—when—

* * * * *

Tom Timkins awoke from the reverie into which he had fallen on the departure of Mr. Gruffey. In the last puff of smoke, ere it had unwound its wreath and dispersed its thin vapour into air, Tom had beheld a phantasmagorical image of the career which we have briefly pictured—a phantom panorama of events created by the fumiferous outpourings of his pipe. The candle had waned in size and waxed long in the wick, but the vaporous cloud that had served as a disc to the dissolving views of his imagination, had only then slowly begun to disappear; the parlour was still and empty, but the remains of the agitator's unpaid-for glass of gin-and-water convinced him that the events of the evening had not been altogether a dream. He rose to knock the ashes out of the bowl, when a low murmurous sound, at first soft and subdued as the early breathings of a spring zephyr, attracted his attention. He listened, and then, apparently acquiring a more sonorous tone by practice, the voice proceeded to distinguish him by name. He bent his head more acutely over the bowl to listen, and his suspicions were confirmed—the voice emanated from the old meerschau.

"Tom!" (it was the mouth-piece that thus spoke) "you have had a slight intimation given to you of what befalls those who neglect their own business to run after that of other people. You're a good workman, Tom—a sound, steady, sober, reasonable thinker into the bargain, and a man whom I am proud to shake by the hand. I feel a glow of conscious pride at the tip of my bowl when you honour me with a spark, and I am bound for that very reason to see that you are not led astray by false lights. Heaven knows that there are enough evils in this world to be redressed without adding to them others of our own creation. Go on getting reform for everything that wants it, but do it with a firm determination to use no violence—an earthquake upsets a city altogether. It is your quiet, practical builders and men of calm judgment and good taste that improve it. People don't like to be bullied into submission, but convince them with plain, sensible reasoning, and they are sure to yield in the end. Physical force, Tom, rely upon it, is after all a coward's argument, and carries no permanent value or respect with it. Cutting the throat of one man is not the most likely way of ingratiating yourself with his next-door neighbour; the tongue is a far more formidable weapon than the bludgeon, and in the cause of right will more promptly gain the redress sought. You, and others who have worked like you, Tom, have an honest claim to rank among the highest; but society is not a see-saw, where you must see one end fall before the opposite extremity can rise. Legislature is like a fire which everybody thinks he can poke the best; but those who are always setting you on to make a blaze only want you to burn your own fingers that they may save theirs. Above all, don't abuse the press, Tom; it is the poor man's best friend, and has done more service to the good cause than all the pikes, and bullets, and blustering threats in the world. Have as much reform as you like—you cannot strive too much in the right path; but talk about accomplishing great measures by violent means, and you throw away the last chance you have of obtaining them."

The old meerschau here gave such a long whiff that it fairly exhausted itself; and as the candle exhibited at the same time unequivocal symptoms of syncope, Tom contented himself with the hints given, and withdrew to his chamber, therein to meditate on the mysterious events of the night. We may say, that if not a "*sadder*," at least a "*better*" man he rose the morrow morn; and from that period it has passed into a kind of proverb among the merry circle now wont to congregate in the snug parlour of the Roebuck, that when any abstruse question is hence proposed for discussion, the most satisfactory plan is to leave it to the arbitration of *Tom Timkins's Pipe*.

MAXIMILIAN ROBESPIERRE:

HIS LIFE AND OPINIONS.*

By PERCY B. ST. JOHN.

CHAPTER IV.—ROBESPIERRE AND MARAT—ROBESPIERRE AND THE GIRONDINS.

RECENT events in France will no doubt induce the publication, at no distant period, of many new documents connected with Robespierre. We shall every day have a portion of the dark and bloody veil cast around him by hate and calumny removed, and the man made known, not as the sanguinary wretches who overthrew him have succeeded in representing him to us, but as he was, real and in flesh and blood.

One of the causes which have made the memory of Robespierre-detested is, that against him were ranged a whole army of monks and useless priests. This arose from his peculiar views on the civil constitution of the clergy. An ecclesiastical committee had been formed at an early period of the Revolution, of which the most active members were principally abbés and Jansenistes. The relations of man to the divine power always produce the greatest revolutions. From this date the National Assembly became the council of a new faith, and both the living and the illustrious dead lent their assistance to these debates. Fénelon, Pascal, and other apostles were there. The caustics belonging to the high clergy wrapped themselves in obscure discussions, which only produced the phantoms engendered by darkness. Robespierre then arose. This man had a force of exactitude which did not exclude emotion.

"Priests," said he, "belong to the social order of magistrates, distinct from the maintenance and the service of public worship. From these simple notions are derived all the principles. I present three of them, which have relation to the three chapters of the plan of the committee. The first principle is, that all the public functions are of social institution, and they have for object the order and happiness of society; from which it follows that no function can exist in society which is not useful. Before this maxim the benefices and establishments without object disappear. In France the bishops and curés ought alone to be retained. By the second principle, the ecclesiastical officers being instituted for the happiness of man, and for the general good of the people, it follows that the people ought to have the right of appointing them. By the third principle, the ecclesiastical officers, being established for the good of society, it follows that the amount of their salary should be fixed, with a due regard to the general interest and utility, and not with the desire to gratify and to enrich those who exercise these functions. These three principles contain the complete justification of the project of the committee. I will add an observation of great importance, and one which I ought, perhaps, to have presented at first. When the ecclesiastical constitution is to be regulated, that is to say, the relation of the ministers of public worship with society, the motives which more particularly unite their interests to the public interest must be given to these magistrates, to these public officers. It is, therefore, necessary to attach the priests to society by all the ties in"— At this point the orator was interrupted by mingled applause and murmurs. He then went on to speak of the marriage of priests.†

* Continued from page 189.

† His general views, as recorded above, contain an amount of sense and philosophy rarely found in statesmen. But his proof of the uselessness of mere idlers in all professions made him very many enemies.

Robespierre on two other occasions took a part in the discussion of ecclesiastical matters ; he said :—

"Neither the administrative assemblies nor the clergy can join in the election of bishops ; the only constitutional election is that which has been proposed by the committee. When any one says that this article militates against the spirit of piety, that it is contrary to the principles of good sense, that the people are too corrupted to make good elections, is it not perceived that this inconvenience is relative to all possible elections, that the clergy is not more pure than the people ? I vote for the people. The founder of the Christian religion has recommended the rich to share their riches with the poor ; he willed that his ministers should be poor—he knew that they would be corrupted by riches, he knew that the wealthiest persons are not the most generous, that those who are separated from the miseries of humanity but little pity these miseries, and that by their luxury, and by the wants attached to their riches, they are poor even in the midst of affluence."

Robespierre, towards the end of his oration, was admirable.

"I invoke," cried he, "the justice of the Assembly in favour of the ecclesiastics who have become grey in the ministry, and who, at the end of a long career, have only reaped infirmities from their works ! They have, likewise, for themselves the titles of ecclesiastics, and something more—that is, indigence. I demand that the Assembly declares that it will afford subsistence to ecclesiastics of seventy years of age, who have neither pensions nor benefices." The Revolution had introduced justice and mercy into the church, as it had done into society : it had rendered visible in the world these words of Scripture—"He hath cast down the mighty from their seats, and exalted the humble and meek."

The discussion was tempestuous. The bishops only waited for this moment to break out. They cried "Heresy, scandal !" but the Abbé Gouthes, in the name of the members of the ecclesiastical committee, said—"I make profession to love and honour religion, and if it be necessary I will shed my blood for it." This man supported Robespierre.

It will be seen that Robespierre pays every respect to Christianity ; that he attacks the church only as deviating from the intentions of its great master and head, Jesus Christ our Lord ; and everybody calls Robespierre an atheist, an infidel. Robespierre, in attacking the rich and powerful clergy, made himself fatal enemies. There are no haters like priests. They are cordial in this, at all events. But neither the fate of Robespierre nor that of any other church reformer should discourage. The sacred truths of Christianity are founded on so sure a rock that we need not fear to attack those who make of religion a mere instrument of wealth and power ; this did Robespierre. Hence the libels on his memory published by curé, abbé, and bishop.

All this time the life of Robespierre was most studious and exemplary. He was usually buried in thought. How to make the Revolution succeed was his great idea ; to make it grand, noble, great, sublime, peaceable, was his one object. He therefore saw with pain the publication of the *Ami du Peuple*, in which Marat, writing, as Lamartine grandly says, with blood and bile, distilled venom on the faith of the Revolution.

Marat was now much persecuted for his opinions. He had to hide himself—to fly—to wander in fields and woods ; but he always came back, to pour forth still greater hatred against that society which rejected him. The fact is, society is either too lenient or too oppressive. Either Marat should have been crushed at once, or not persecuted at all. In the same way the insane communists in Paris are hunted and hooted, but no man lays hands on them.

An interview was arranged between Robespierre and Marat, an interview which has not hitherto been recorded in history. It is very curious. They both defended the same principles, and yet they knew not one another, since they sustained their principles in a very different manner. The friend of the people

always spoke of the deputy of Arras with esteem:—"M. de Robespierre, the only deputy who appears learned in great principles, and perhaps the only patriot who sits in the senate." They met with affected politeness on both sides. Robespierre hid nothing. After having praised the motives which incited Marat to action, he ended by warmly reproaching him for the excesses of his sheet, excesses which may obscure, in the eyes of some people, the services rendered by him to the cause of the republic. "There escape you," he said, "here and there certain words which come, I wish to think, from a good intention, but which nevertheless very much compromise our cause. I must beg of you to calm these immoderate angers, which allow your enemies fair opportunity to calumniate your heart."

"You must know," replied Marat, standing proudly erect, "that the influence of my sheet comes from these excesses—from the *audace* with which I dash under foot all human respect. From the effusion of my soul—from the impulse of my heart—from my violent exclamations against despotism—from my impetuous sallies—from my dolorous accents—from my cries of indignation, fury, and despair. These cries of alarm, these tocsins sounded, which you take for words in the air, are the *naïve* expressions of my sentiments—the natural sounds which agitate my heart."

"But," replied Robespierre, "you will confess that, in professing to serve the cause of the people, you have exclaimed sometimes in the name of liberty, in favour of measures opposed to liberty itself."

"What say you about liberty? Five hundred spies seek for me night and day! If they discover me, and hold me, they will cast me into a burning furnace, and I shall die victim of that liberty you accuse me of attacking. God of battles, if I have desired for one instant to seize your sword, it was but to restore, for the poor, the holy laws of nature. Believe me, our simple mission is to make men try new destinies. That which we do we are divinely impelled to do, and our Revolution is but a series, ever continued, of miracles. Each age has its current of ideas, which can neither be turned aside nor dried up: when these currents meet with obstacles, there is a struggle, and thrones—society—the whole part is swept away by an irresistible force. That is the whole history of our revolution. There are moments, I confess, when in the midst of the perils and difficulties of a state of agitation, I myself regret the ancient *regime*; but we must submit to the process of a renewal. We shall rather bring the sea back upon the beach it has deserted, than time back on man and the institutions he has given up. Since the constituents of '89 have provoked and commenced the Revolution, it must be carried on and accomplished at any price. They began it amid festivities and joyful embraces,—we will conclude it in blood and in tears; such is the law. Revolutions are like aspics, their sting is in their tail. We may be shattered during our labours: but what matter? We labour, and our sons alone will reap the fruit of our labours and our sweats. The present generation must disappear. Free men are not made with ancient masters and old slaves. As the lover of a corrupt woman cannot appreciate a good one, so the lover of the oppressive *regime* could neither love nor recognise the nature of a free and reasonable *regime*."

Robespierre listened with terror: he became pale, and was for some time silent.

"You are, then," said he at last, "for measures of blood? If you pretend to strike down all those who inflicted the yoke, and all those who bore it, the half of France would perish."

"You know," replied Marat, "that our revolution is surrounded by obstacles and by resistance; in a calm time, and when the reigning system is well seated, the disasters may be brought back by patience, by moderation, and they will be attached to the constitution by seeing the benefits which arise from it; but in the midst of faction, of civil wars, and the principles of ruin which menace on every side our growing liberty, we have neither the time nor the

leisure to act thus. We must crush all who resist, and answer war by war. Baited, bit in the flower, covered with dust and wounds, our revolution is the wild boar pursued by the pack of hounds; let those who stay or resist take the consequence. Revolutions begin by the war and finish by the sword. I did not myself foresee in '89 that we should be forced to cut off heads; but that was error and blindness. Every revolution creates among those whose ancient privileges are disturbed irreconcilable hatreds. A struggle begins, a struggle to the death, in which the new government must strike or be struck down. Conquered or cashiered on one point, our enemies show themselves on another. To get rid of them they must be destroyed. You know all this as well as I do, but you dare not avow them."

Robespierre was silent.

"No revolution," continued Marat, "will be more economical than ours of the blood of the people. We war not—we are warred against. The holy epidemic of liberty gains everywhere in all haste; it is that which will deliver us from all our enemies by exalting all thrones, and making servitude disappear. This is better than cannon. We are hard but to the enemy from within, because with these we can neither hope for amnesty or treaty. They must fall under our blows or we must fall under theirs. If we miss them they will not miss us. But, once more, this state of violence cannot last; it is the passage from the ancient to the new *regime*. Our principles will soon make of all Frenchmen children of the same family; they will re-unite all hearts, confound interests, and bring together all the scattered members: then will be formed a new spectacle, unknown unto this day, and finer than ever the sun illumined before. I am represented as an agitator and disturber. The friend of the people, on the contrary, is not less an enemy of licence than he is passionately attached to order, peace, and justice. But as long as the revolution is not accomplished, I look upon it as a duty to excite the people, and to keep them awake against the perfidy of her ancient rulers. Monarchy tries to raise its head triumphant under new forms and new disguises; I see Louis XVI. behind the Girondins. I am accused of flattering the populace, and of descending to its caprices, in order the better to carry out my will. Falsehood! Read my paper, and you will see how I treat, on the contrary, that embittered and restless portion of the people called the populace. If I have sometimes used them, it is because in revolutions they are wanted to stir up the masses. Bread is not made without leaven. Besides, it is not the government of one class of Frenchmen which I wish to establish, it is the government of all. I believe that attached to our liberty is that of all the people of the earth, who are our brothers. Do not be surprised if I am angry against those who would oppose this noble design, and who retard by their plots the reign of justice. This reign must come as I must perish. Thence these words in the air, these transports of indignation which you blame—but which will always be drawn from me by the picture of the miseries of the human race, and by the sentiment of its oppression. I am not one of those icy souls who see others suffer without being nerved; such scenes enrage me so my anger knows no bounds. I then cry, "Avenge yourself, my friends,—avenge yourselves! Kill and burn, and stop not until the whole human race is delivered from its executioners!"

Robespierre retired from the conversation terrified, alarmed, horror-struck. But he wanted power to crush the semi-madman, Marat, while he also unfortunately wanted courage to denounce him. Esquiros thus explains the difference of these two men:—

"Robespierre, firm, pure, convinced, but cold, wished the triumphs of the Revolution by means less prompt than the *Ami du Peuple*. These tempestuous bursts alarmed him. This bold profession of faith retarded, according to him, the success of their cause. These conductors of public opinion only differed, however, as to the means to be employed to regenerate the French nation, and through them the whole human race. The life and profession of war leave strong traces on their ideas. Robespierre treated the Revolution like a speech—

Marat as an experiment. The lawyer saw in the people a client to defend; the doctor looked upon the social body as a sick person wanting a vein opened."

The results of this interview were serious. Robespierre at the Jacobins repelled all connivance with Marat, whose dangerous zeal and extravagances he blamed. Marat disavowed, on the other side, Robespierre as his dictator. "I declare," wrote he in his paper, "that Robespierre has no influence over my pen, though it has often been used to render him justice; an interview I have just had with him confirms me in my opinion that he unites the lights of a wise senator to the integrity of a good man, but that he wants both the views and audacity of a statesman."

Robespierre was scarcely yet a republican. He cared little for form so long as he had the reality. He writes thus in a letter to the people:—

"I have not partaken the general fear which the name of king inspires. So that the nation be put in its place, and that there be a free flight for patriotism, which the nature of our revolution has created, I do not fear royalty, nor even the hereditary existence of royal functions in the same family."

The Girondins were, however, hot republicans. Esquiros thus sketches the opposition of Robespierre to this party:—

"The man who was to combat the opinion of Brissot was Robespierre; suspicious probity beside cynicism masked by clever pride. Robespierre, who since the closing of the Constituant had made a journey to Arras, came back with a reputation increased by his absence. Intrepid and immovable in his ideas, he was ready to seal with his blood the happiness of all. The Montagnards were at this period men of peace. Liberty is an idea—war is a fact, and a brutal fact. They declared against war. These men of inspiration had faith in the popular sentiment, which upsets the wisdom of sages, which changes light into darkness and darkness into light.

Worthless in character, an ex-spy, an immoral writer, he stood no chance against Robespierre. But such were the Gironde, so much lauded—Brissot an intriguer, Petion a hypocrite, Domouries a traitor, Lousset a debauched rake; such were the chiefs of this splendid party. They wanted war. Robespierre opposed it. Alone in the Jacobins, he contended against its follies and wickedness. Camille Desmoulins thus speaks of his courageous opposition of the French love of glory:—

"The talent of Robespierre," writes Camille Desmoulins, "has risen to a pitch hopeless for his enemies and the enemies of liberty; he was sublime; he caused tears to be shed by all."

Barrere on his death bed thus alludes to this period:—

"Robespierre had the temperament of great men, and posterity will give him this title. He was great when alive in the constituent assembly; he had courage to defend the sovereignty of the people; he was great when, later, in the assembly of the Jacobins, he alone balanced the whole force of the government, and stayed the decree of war against Germany."

Again we admire Robespierre. The Girondins, like men insincere and unconvinced, attached great importance to forms. Pharisees of the Revolution, they adopted its outward form, and they exaggerated in everything. The *bonnet rouge*, so much talked of as the symbol of *sans-culottism*, was the precious invention of the Gironde. Brissot thus advocates it in his journal:—

"It is priests and despots who introduced the *triste* uniform of hats, as also the ridiculous and servile ceremony of bowing, which degrades a man by making him bow before his fellow a bare and submissive head. Remark the difference between a *bonnet* and a *chapeau*. The one, *triste*, sad, monotonous, is the emblem of mourning and magisterial morosity; the other enlivens and opens the countenance, renders it more assured and free, covers the head without hiding it, lightens the natural dignity, and is susceptible of all kinds of improvements."

In Paris, amid its mercurial population, a new fashion is always accepted. Everybody wore the *bonnet rouge*. Robespierre again resisted the general movement; he contended always against all exaggerations, false ideas, and puerile

innovations. He neither let his beard grow nor his nails, nor neglected his hair, nor wore hideous clothes by way of placarding his patriotism. He always took care of his hair, and his habiliments, without being of a very *recherchée* elegance, were always clean and decent. The fact is, Maximilian thought that the love of liberty was compatible with clean shirts. He accordingly always spoke against the *bonnet rouge*, which became soon the mere standard of a party, composed of the ultra-democrats or anarchists.

Again, when the Girondins called upon the people to arm themselves with pikes, Robespierre was in arms against them. "It is difficult to be astonished, if the Montagnards, who believe in humanity, in national unity, whose ideas were that citizens were of one and the same family, showed themselves indifferent to these puerilities. I speak of the fabrication of pikes. Too much iron must not be put into the hands of a multitude newly freed, for it is to be feared this ever will, sooner or later, be dipped in blood. The Girondins, stayed in their designs by the words or by the silence of Robespierre, ceased not to accuse his pride. . . . But personal egotism, egotism of cant, such is the primitive rock met a little below the surface by those who take the trouble to sound the intentions of the Gironde. Sensation was their doctrine, nature was their God."

The great secret of the hate of the Gironde against Robespierre was that he was religious. Esquiros says—"We have not sufficiently inquired why the man ended by effacing all the other figures of the Gironde of the mountain; eloquent Danton was like him, and so were the Gironde; patient, tenacious, inflexible, other men partook with him these qualities. No! if Robespierre held firm against all his enemies; if, overthrown by the slain, the mainmast of the republic was broken, it is because in him was the religious idea of the Revolution."

Robespierre saw the hand of God in everything. On one occasion he cried—"Let us fear to weary the goodness of Heaven, which until now has been obstinately bent on saving us, despite ourselves." This phrase caused him much abuse from the infidel Gironde.

Previous to the 10th of August—an insurrectionary movement, in which Robespierre had no hand—an attempt was made to place him at the head of the movement, which was thought necessary to stop the counter-revolutionary projects of the Court. It is thus related by Lamartine:—

"Another attempt took place in the name of Robespierre, but without his knowledge, to rally the Marseillaise to his cause. Two of the confidants of Robespierre, Panis and Freron, his colleagues in the municipality, sent for Rebecqui and Barbaroux to the Hotel de Ville, under the pretext of giving to the Marseillaise battalions a barracks nearer to the centre of the revolutionary movements—at the Cordeliers. This offer was accepted. Panis, Freron, Sergeant covered their thoughts in clouds. 'The people want a chief. Brissot aspires to dictatorship—Pethun possesses it without exercising it. He is too feeble a genius. He doubtless loves the revolution, but he wants impossibilities—legal revolutions! If his feebleness had not been violent, there would have been no result.'

"The next day Barbaroux went to Robespierre. The hot-headed young man of the south was struck with astonishment on entering the dwelling of the austere and cold philosopher. The personality of Robespierre, like a worship that he rendered to himself, appeared in everything, and was breathed forth even in the ornaments of his simple cabinet; everywhere his own image—in pencil, in pen and ink, or in marble. Robespierre did not go beyond general reflections on the march of the Revolution, on the acceleration which the Jacobins had given to the movement, on the imminence of an approaching crisis, and on the urgency there was to give it a centre—a soul—a chief, by investing a man with popular omnipotence.

"'We wish not for a dictator any more than for a king,' said Rebecqui, brusquement.

"They thus parted. Panis accompanied the young Marseillaise, and said to Rebecqui, squeezing his hand—

"You have ill understood; nothing was intended but a momentary and insurrectionary authority to direct and save the people, and not of a dictatorship. Robespierre is this man of the people."

Except this conversation, provoked by the friends of Robespierre, unknown to him, and accepted by the Marseillaise chiefs, nothing indicates in Robespierre the premature ambition of dictatorship, nor even any direct participation in the movement of the 10th of August. The Republic was for him an ideal perspective in an ideal distance; the Regency was for him a reign of feebleness and civil trouble; the Duke of Orleans he hated, as a crowned intriguer; the constitution of 1781, loyally executed, would have sufficed, without the treachery of the Court. The dictatorship he desired was the dictatorship of public opinion—the sovereignty of his words.

Shortly after, the 10th of August came, and the monarchy virtually fell. Whatever may have been the secret sentiments of Robespierre, he had no hand in this event. Shortly after, Danton, Hebert, and others organised the atrocious massacres in the prisons, known as the Massacres of September. This bloody event, the most awful in the whole Revolution, is almost inexplicable. Two hundred men terrified all Paris; entered the prisons, and killed and slaughtered all therein, without let or hindrance. Marat himself never was guilty of a worse atrocity, which rests as the great blood-stain of the Revolution. A careful examination of history leaves no doubt as to its author. Danton was the man, the most dangerous of the revolutionists, because, while using the people, he had neither faith in them, nor cared for them. In fact, he never denied his guilt. Sometimes, after being accused of the massacre, he accepted the responsibility, and said, "I looked my crime in the face, and I did it."

To understand another part of this tragedy, we must quote a scene from the admirable pages of Lamartine:—

"As to the part which Robespierre played during these days, it was the same which he affected in all the crises. In the question of war, from the 20th of June to the 10th of August, he did not act—he blamed—but he left the event to take its course; and when accomplished, he accepted it as a step in the Revolution, upon which he had no occasion to return. He did not wish to give to others an advantage in popularity—he washed his hands from this blood, and he allowed it to be shed. But his credit, inferior to that of Danton and of Marat, in the Council of the Commune, did not then afford the power of hindering anything. He was, like Pethion, in the shade. These men, as also the Girondins, saw the projects of Marat and Danton transpire; unable to prevent them, they affected to be ignorant of them. A fact, recently revealed by a confidant of Robespierre and of Saint Just, outlives these unfortunate times, and proves the justness of those conjectures on the part of Robespierre in the executions of the days of September.

"At that time Robespierre and the young Saint Just—the one already celebrated, the other as yet obscure—lived in that state of familiarity which often unites the master and disciple. Saint Just, already mixed in the movement of the times, followed and outran with his eye the crises of the Revolution with the cold impassibility of a logic which hardens the heart as a system, and renders it cruel as an abstraction. Politics were to his eyes a deadly battle, and the conquered were the victims. On the 2nd of September, at eight o'clock in the evening, Robespierre and Saint Just left the Jacobins together, harrassed with fatigue of body and mind, by a day entirely passed in the tumult of deliberations, and pregnant of such a terrible night.

"Saint Just lodged in a little furnished room in the Rue Saint Anne, not far from the house of Duplay, the joiner, inhabited by Robespierre. In talking over the events of the day, and the threatening signs for the morrow, the two friends arrived at the door of Saint Just's house. Robespierre, absorbed in thought, ascended the stair, to continue the conversation, until, arriving at the

young man's room, Saint Just threw his clothes on a chair, and disposed himself for sleep.

"What do you do?" said Robespierre to him.

"I go to bed," replied Saint Just.

"What! you think of sleeping on such a night!" cried Robespierre. "Do you not hear the tocsin? Do you not know that this night will, perhaps, be the last for thousands of your fellow creatures, who are men at the moment in which you fall asleep, and who will be corpses when you waken?"

"Alas!" answered Saint Just. "I know that there will be a massacre this night. I deplore it. I wish I were powerful enough to be enabled to moderate the conflicts of a people which debates between death and liberty; but say not so. And besides, after all, those who will be sacrificed this night are not friends to our ideas. Adieu."

"Thus saying, he fell asleep."

"The next morning, at daybreak, Saint Just, on awaking, saw Robespierre, who was walking with disturbed steps in the chamber, and who, from time to time, pressed his brow against the glass of the window, looking for the daylight in the sky, and listening to the noise in the street. Saint Just, astonished to see his friend so early in the same place, cried out—

"What has brought you here so soon to-day?"

"What has brought me?" answered Robespierre. "Do you think that I have returned?"

"What, then, you have not been to sleep?" inquired Saint Just.

"Sleep?" replied Robespierre; "Sleep? while hundreds of assassins massacre thousands of victims, and while blood, both pure and impure, runs like water in the streets. Oh, no!" continued he, in a gloomy voice, and with a Sardonian smile on his lips, "no, I did not go to bed. I watched, like remorse or crime. Yes, I was weak enough not to go to sleep, but DANTON—HE SLEPT."

This anecdote, given on good authority, exculpates Robespierre, with the testimony even of his enemies, from all participation in the greatest crime of the Revolution. It will be found that he was equally guiltless on nearly every other occasion.

THE INDIAN ISLANDERS.*

THE Eastern Archipelago has lately become, we may say, an all-engrossing topic in the commercial, literary, and scientific world. Numberless works, papers, and articles have been written on the subject: there have, however, been none devoted exclusively to the manners, customs, religion, and modes of life peculiar to Borneo, and the islands adjacent.

No portion of the globe affords an equal example of the want of a wide-spread and established faith. It is true, indeed, that there exists among the various populations an indistinct notion of some kind of spirit exerting an influence more or less beneficial on the whole human race, but of the extent and nature of whose power they are totally ignorant, and when questioned on the subject, seem perfectly at a loss. The Rajah Brooke falling into conversation with a Dyak of Lundu, asked him a great many questions concerning the customs and religion of his tribe, which we extract.

"When a chief dies, what becomes of his spirit?"

* "Events in Borneo and Celebe, from the Private Journals of James Brooke, Esq.; with a Narrative of Operations on the Coast of Borneo, in H.M.S. Iris, by Captain Rodney Mundy, R.N." Murray. 1848.

"It goes into the clouds."

"When the chief dies, and goes into the clouds, do you ever see him again?"

"No; but when his friend dies, too, they will meet."

"Amongst these spirits, is there one great spirit above the rest?"

He seemed only half to comprehend, and on the question being repeated, said—

"I do not know; but there are a great many spirits of my countrymen in the clouds; others are not there."

"Did he know there was a God?"

"Yes."

"What is God?"

"He did not know, but he had heard the word."

"Do the Dyaks offer sacrifice or pray like the Islamites?"

"They offer sacrifice of hog and deer."

"To whom do they offer sacrifice?"

"To Biadum."

"Who is Biadum?"

"A great Dyak chief of former days."

"Biadum—is he one person, or are there many like him?"

"Biadum is one person."

"Do they ever offer sacrifice to any other person?"

"Never, never; to Biadum alone."

"Did they ever see Biadum?"

"No; the people of former days saw him."

"Who sends snow, lightning, thunder, and rain?"

"Biadum."

"Here my visitor showed such unequivocal signs of weariness, that I ordered him something to eat, and he partook of salt beef, biscuit, and grog. I closed our questions by asking him—

"Are many of your tribe converted to Islam?"

"Yes, a good many."

"Are you of Islam?"

"No; I do not want to be."

"I then dismissed my wild man for the day."

There are many tribes, however, who from time to time have been converted to the faith of Islam, among whom we may mention the Minkokas, dwelling in Celebes. These must, however, be divided into two distinct communities—those living near the sea, and those who make the valleys of the interior mountains their home. The former have in some measure been civilised by their intercourse with the Bugis and Bajow people, and have adopted the Mohammedan creed, without, however, rejecting their ancient and savage practices. Indeed, the principal sign of their religion consists in the abhorrence of pork and other unclean meats. The hill-dwellers remain in their primitive state of ignorance and barbarism. Their language bears no affinity to that spoken by the Sumatrans, Malays, or Bugis. In general appearance, however, they greatly resemble the last-mentioned people, being of rather diminutive stature, though exceedingly well made and clean limbed. Their clothing consists, in most instances, of nothing but a pair of very short trousers, though some few wear the sarong.

These people wear their hair long over their shoulders, serving as their only head-dress. They decorate their arms with rings of plaited bamboo and carved shells.

Of warlike weapons no savage race is destitute. Accordingly, these Minkokas, each and all, are provided with poniards, short, but broad and formidable; and adorned at the hilt with tufts of hair, human or otherwise as the case may be. Besides this they have long cut-and-thrust swords, with spears, and the sumpitan, or blowpipe, to cast poisoned darts—that extraordinary weapon peculiar to barbarous races. Like most of the other inhabitants of the Indian

Archipelago they pursue the practice of head hunting, which, however, is not so general in this as among other tribes, it being only resorted to at funerals or festive gatherings. The death of a great chief affords a special occasion. When this occurs, the friends and relatives of the dead man, each with a white band bound round his forehead to denote his purpose, sally forth and destroy every enemy they can lay hands on. "From twenty to forty heads, according to the rank of the deceased rajah, being procured, buffaloes are killed, rice boiled, and a solemn funeral feast is held, and whatever time may elapse, the body is not previously buried. The heads on being cleaned, are hung up in the houses of three principal persons of the tribe, and regarded with great veneration and respect. It is not necessary, as with the Dyaks, to produce a skull previous to marriage; nor, except on the occasion mentioned and during war, do they take any heads."

The Minkoka people marry but one wife.

Thus much for Celebes.—Mr. Brooke's account of this island will be perused with interest by all. Few travellers have penetrated so far as he did. Had we space, we could make numerous extracts from this portion of the work, such as the deer hunting, the visit to the caverns of Mampo, compared by our countryman to the palaces of Alhambra, and others equally striking. However, magazine laws are stern, and allow only of a certain amount of matter. We therefore reluctantly transplant ourselves from Celebes to Borneo, where we find Mr. Brooke among the Bukara tribe of Dyaks, whose notions of a supreme being are extraordinary to the last degree. Entertaining no definite idea of a God, they possess a dim perception of a great spirit dwelling far above the clouds, who sends thunder, lightning, and rain. They never pray nor offer sacrifice to this invisible deity. However, their belief is that the dead, after they have been buried, depart to a place similar to the happy hunting grounds of the Indians, called Sabyan. They expect that all friends will meet again there in a state of endless beatitude if they have been good in this life; but if wicked, though they would go to Sabyan, it would be to another division of it, where they would be far from happy. This belief is very general among the Bornean tribes.

The Bukars have by some writers been denounced as cannibals; this, however, is not the fact, though one Indian tribe in the neighbouring island of Sumatra—the Battas—occasionally justify the accusation; for when a man has been convicted of some particular crime, he is sentenced to be tied to a stake and devoured alive by the assembled multitude. The palms of the hands and the soles of the feet are reserved as *bon-bouches* for favoured individuals—a barbarous mode of executing justice, certainly, but the Battas of Sumatra are somewhat different from the Bukars of Borneo.

The Kayans, a tribe of wild Dyaks in the interior of Borneo, have partly been converted to the faith of Islam. This, however, does not prevent their devouring any quantity of pork-chops they can procure; indeed, their religion appears to be but a name, as they are totally ignorant on the subject. They are expert in the use of the sumpitan, are fond of music and dancing, and bear a good character for honesty and punctuality in performing their engagements.

"I observed one of their customs somewhat new to me; a child was sick, and, as a charm, a straight stick, six feet high, was stuck in a water jar before the door of the apartment in which it lay; leaves, surmounted by a Baltic handkerchief, crowned the head, and the stem was twined with a waist-cloth. On inquiry, I learned that it was a charm, and that a ghost or fairy would descend and make known the best cure for the child, either in a dream, or whilst they were awake, they couldn't be certain which."

The manners and customs of the inhabitants of Sarawak, which Mr. Brooke, as rajah of the province, has abundant opportunity of observing, are simple and primitive in the extreme, though ridiculous and absurd. The Dyaks are remarkably mild and gentle, and exceedingly attached to their white ruler,

whom they make much account of in their religious ceremonies. For instance, when praying to their great god, Jowata, they fill small cups with yellow rice, which a chief then takes and presents in succession to Mr. Brooke, after which the contents are scattered over the ground, while a prayer is muttered to the supreme being.

Mr. Brooke observes that the moral code of the Sarawakians, though rather low, is sufficiently respected; while quietness and tractability form characteristics of the Dyak tribes. To ingratiate himself with the people it has been the universal rule of the English Rajah never to mock any of their prejudices, while he submits with perfect good humour to the most ridiculous ceremonies, among numerous instances of which we extract the following:—"When I seat myself on the mat one by one they come forward and tie little bells on my arms; a young cocoa nut is brought, into which I am requested to spit. The white furl is presented,—I rise and wave it and say, 'may good luck attend the Dyaks; may their crops be plentiful; may their fruits ripen in due season; may male children be born; may rice be stored in their houses; may wild hogs be killed in the jungle; may they have cold weather.' This exhortation over, the dance begins. Men and women advance, take my hand, stroke their own faces, with a wild indescribable shriek, and begin a slow, monotonous, twisting, wriggling movement, with arms extended, the measure being occasionally faster, when the old ladies feel inclined to indulge in a jump; when this occurs the music gradually becomes more furious and the dance proportionably animated, then may be seen a shy boy or girl stealthily mixing in the crowd, and perhaps some proud mamma will bring her little child of six or seven, and put her into the circle, and the tiny creature will move her tiny hands in unison to the music. At Raping, on my late excursion, the wife of the Orang Kaya, who was very pretty, and danced exceedingly well, insisted upon exhibiting herself before Bethune and myself, and by this little piece of vanity greatly disturbed the economy of the dance. This being observed and complained of by the other performers, the head man (at once the chief and the master of the ceremonies), said in a loud tone, addressing her by name, 'Why don't you dance fair? There you are dancing before the great man, and the great man can see no one but you.'

Among the sea Dyaks exists an extraordinary custom, which may be briefly described. It seems to be peculiar to a few tribes. The principal doctor or magician of the community is chosen as "Manang," and thereafter considered as a woman, and dresses as such. *She* or *he* marries a husband, adopts children, lives altogether among the women, and performs all the domestic duties incidental to the sex.

The principal occupation of this *man-woman*, if we may be allowed the term, is to perform the cure of certain diseases by the use of various charms, driving away devils, and exorcising wicked spirits. The whole is a gross superstition; though, as it leads to no evil results, it is not interfered in by Mr. Brooke, whose whole policy is marked by a rigid abstinence from the practice generally so prevalent among European travellers, of ridiculing the practices, and offending the prejudices, of the races among whom they may happen to be for the time located. There are many harmless ceremonies attendant on the election of any new candidate for this office. A branch of a tree is fixed on the Manang's head; around it is wrapped a piece of white cloth, and near this spot the spathe of the betel or areca nut is placed.

Then a great assembly of the people is convened, shouts are uttered, gongs are beaten, shells rattled, and all proclaim, in every possible way, their joy and satisfaction. The Manang to whom our countryman was introduced became so when quite a child, and was then well stricken in years.

It may not be amiss here to extract an account of the mode of taking the crocodile adopted in Borneo: it is curious and characteristic:—

"A monkey or cat is attached to a stick as a bait, which the monster sucks

down lengthways, and when the strain comes on this gets across his throat. To the stick is attached, by a cord, a long rattan (cane), which floats on the surface of the water, and which the animal attempts to get rid of. In the vicinity of this floating bait a dog is confined on a stage, beyond the crocodile's reach, in which miserable position it is not surprising that he should howl somewhat lustily. The crocodile, attracted by the noise, approaches the spot with great caution; and the natives state that if he encountered any resistance in taking the bait, he would immediately retire, without a second attempt. When, however, he has swallowed it, which he does slowly, as he never suddenly tears the bait, he carries it to the shore, and it is sometimes two or three days before the long rattan is found, as he frequently takes it some distance, and secretes himself amongst the bushes and weeds of a small creek."

The manner in which capital punishment is executed at Kimanis is characteristic. A thick mosquito net is given to the criminal, who wraps it about his person, and, when all is prepared, gives the signal, upon which the fatal noose is instantly attached, and death ensues in a moment. At Sarawak it is somewhat different. The prisoner's arms are extended, his breast bared, and the kris fixed within the left clavicle bone. All being ready, a sign is made, and the executioner, by a sudden movement, drives the weapon home to the heart. Death by this means is instantaneous.

Having thus glanced briefly at a few of the customs and ceremonies used upon particular occasions by the natives of Borneo, we shall now proceed to touch on the more regular and common ceremonies, courtships, marriage, and the varied modes of burial. Of course courtship comes first, being generally a preliminary of marriage.

No youth of quality dare venture to say sweet words to an aristocratic girl, unless the said sweet words be accompanied by a net-ful of fresh human heads, thrown at the blushing maiden's feet. If a young man can accumulate a sufficient number of these trophies, he places them carefully in a receptacle somewhat resembling a cabbage-net, slings them on his shoulder, and proceeds forthwith to the house where resides the object of his desires. He then offers the heads at the same time that he places at the lady's disposal his hand and heart.

If his addresses be agreeable, the damsel desires her lover to cut a large bamboo cudgel from the neighbouring jungle, and when armed with this instrument she carefully arranges the *cadeau d'amour* on the floor, and by repeated blows beats the skulls into fragments, which, when thus pounded, are scraped up and cast into the river, the damsel at the same time throwing herself into the arms of her enraptured lover. So commences the honeymoon.

The usual practice, in other cases, however, is to guard the skulls, pickling them with care, as from the extreme heat of the climate constant attention is required to preserve them.

The above account is the only one worth relating here; we shall, therefore, proceed at once to the next in succession—viz., marriage ceremonies, which, however, are not very varied or interesting.

The people of the tribe of Sinar are not obliged to take possession of a head before marriage, being in this respect almost singular. The ceremonies among them are as described in the following extract:—

"They have four cups, in which are hog's blood, fowl's blood, rice, and gold dust, each in a separate cup. Four cups are carried by the bride, four by the bridegroom, in a tray on their heads, and when they retire to rest these are placed over their couch. They do not assemble the tribe, nor do they feast, the immediate relatives of the parties only being present."

Among some races there is very little ceremony. The lady is at perfect liberty to accept or refuse her admirer, as she pleases, and matches are made with very little intervention on the part of the parents, who, after the usual period of courtship has elapsed, cannot withhold their consent to the union, if both parties are agreeable. The lover then presents his father-in-law with a

present suiting his circumstances, and the bride returns with him to his house, when the ceremony is completed, and the marriage considered as accomplished. It will thus be seen that a girl may marry without the consent, or even the advice of any of her immediate relations, and also that very little ceremony is observed on the occasion.

However, the rites attendant on the disposal of the dead are not so devoid of solemnity as the hasty and uncereemonious solemnisation of marriage would appear to warrant. We must not, however, be understood to mean that solemnity in burials is universal. Some tribes rather neglect their dead, though among the generality no want of respect is ever shown.

In some places the people content themselves, at the death of a relation, with burning an abundance of wood, cloth, rice, and *one head* with the corpse. The spirit is then supposed to descend to Sabyan, a place of which we have already made mention.

The Kayans have a mode of burial so curious that we cannot avoid making an extract that the reader may have it described in Mr. Brooke's own rapid and graphic language.

"When a man dies, his friends and relatives meet in the house, and take their usual seats around the room. The deceased is then brought in, attired in his best clothes, with a cigar fixed in the mouth, and being placed on the mat in the same manner as he would have arranged himself when alive, his betel box is set by his side. The friends go through the forms of conversing with him, and offer him the best advice concerning his future proceedings, and then having feasted, the body is deposited in a large coffin, and kept in the house for several months. At the end of this time the friends and relatives again assemble, and the coffin is taken out, and deposited on a high pole or tree in a particular direction. The deceased during the procession, is repeatedly cautioned to beware he does not lose his way—'Follow the road (they say), till it branches in three directions; be careful in selecting the centre path, for this will conduct you to your own country, whilst that to the right leads to Borneo, and that to the left to the sea.' After many similar cautions, the coffin is deposited, and the assembly separates."

Some tribes dispose of the dead simply by burning, others bury them without any ceremony. The only reason the Dyaks give for burning their dead, is that the smoke ascending to heaven goes to Jowata, the god of the Bornean races. Among one community the custom prevails of interring the corpse, and along with it various articles, such as spears and other arms, clothes, rice, *ciri*, betel, and the head which the deceased first gained during his lifetime. Here it may not be amiss to give a description of a Dyak cemetery, which at all events may serve to illustrate the superstitious feeling prevalent in the wild island of Borneo, among the wonderful races which inhabit it.

"It was situated on the slightly-elevated ridge near the channel, shaded by fine trees. Each grave was entirely covered by a bundle of sticks, a foot and a half or two feet in height. These were kept together by a transverse cross. On the grave of the men were placed the scabbard of their swords, their arm-rings, and other light ornaments, whilst over those of the women, were hung their waist-rings of rattan; a jar of water and food were placed at the head and foot of each, and in a hole amid the burying-place I saw two skulls, but they had the appearance of being the heads of persons accidentally disinterred."

Having thus glanced at one peculiarity in each of the grand ceremonies of this world as practised among the Indian islanders, we trust our readers may be enabled to form some idea of the present state of civilisation and religion in Borneo. Barbarous and primitive they are indeed, savage and tending to deteriorate the character of the people. Yet, with the exception of the head-taking, it will have been observed that the Dyaks are a simple and inoffensive people,

easily carried away by feeling, and fondly clinging to old prejudices and customs. Affectionate and honest in almost all the relations of life, they still show signs of the innate propensities of all savage races, a thirst for blood—a carelessness of human life, a disregard of those prejudices and manners of living common among the civilised portions of this world's inhabitants.

We sincerely wish that our task consisted not in describing the rites and ceremonies practised by races of our fellow men plunged in the deepest darkness, but in describing the progress of Christianity in their hitherto much neglected and almost unknown lands. Already we see with pleasure that Mr. Brooke has succeeded in some degree in ameliorating the condition of the unhappy Dyaks. Unhappy they indeed are at present. Enveloped in the densest cloud of ignorance, wrapped for ages in obscurity, neglected, left to their own resources, the savage tribes of Borneo have ever lived, a by-word for barbarism and wretchedness.

The stigma of this rests, we are sorry to say, on the nations of Europe. When the Dutch and Portuguese first established an influence in the Eastern seas, was it to civilise the people or to carry the benefits of commerce among them? Far from it. Their only idea was that of enriching and aggrandising themselves at the expense of the benighted races they oppressed, by drawing forth the resources of countries hardly equalled in wealth by any others on the face of the globe for fertility, and the variety of its productions, mineral, vegetable, and agricultural, with a climate mild and gentle, where you can enjoy in the different districts, the temperature of spring, summer, autumn, and winter.

Among the most valuable of the products of Borneo is its wood. There are to be met with in every direction vast forests of inexhaustible supplies of timber fit for ship building, and almost every other purpose to which the material is applied. No limits can be set to the extent to which wealth may flow from this source into the coffers of the enterprising. Nor is it alone for its commercial riches that Borneo offers advantages to the settler; it is a beautiful and delightful country; towering hills, broad plains, magnificent forests, noble rivers, meet the eye in succession. Every variety of landscape is presented. Here the eye may meet with a pile of lofty mountains rearing their heads one above another, among whose craggy ravines the voice of torrents is never silent as they precipitate themselves from stupendous heights and dash into spray in the rocky basins below; there the beholder finds his gaze enchanted by a lovely glade refreshed by some pleasant water-brook, and adorned with every variety of flower and shrub, and climbing parasite, brilliant with bright blossoms.

Moreover, as we have observed, the inhabitants of this magnificent island are on the whole a simple and inoffensive race, the slaves of ancient prejudices, nurtured in barbarous practices, ignorant, debased, and enslaved. Hospitality, too, is a universal characteristic of the Dyaks. The weary traveller never fails in finding where to shelter himself from storm and tempest, wind and rain.

Having thus, we trust, particularised some few of the principal characteristics of those singular races inhabiting the no less singular island of Borneo, we shall now, for the present, at least, take leave of them, and trust that ere long we shall have to describe the progress of Christianity, the advancement of commerce, and the spread of the arts of civilisation among the wild tribes over whom now hangs the darkest cloud of ignorance, now for the first time beginning to melt and scatter before the breath of European influence.

THE FOUR HENRYS.

HISTORY is replete with strange coincidences, and we read of such inexplicable events that we are almost led to believe that they are ordained by Providence, and become the inevitable fate of some families. Among the many strange but well-authenticated facts that we read of in French history, we may quote the following:—For instance, the succession of three brothers *successively*,* to the throne of France has always preceded the overthrow or the extinction of that dynasty, and paved the way to a new line. Philippe le Bel dies, and leaves four sons: three of them occupy the throne successively—Louis le Hutin, the first; then Philippe le Long; and lastly, Charles le Bel. With him the branch of the Capets becomes extinct, and is replaced by the Valois—Henry II. dies, and also leaves four sons, three of whom became kings of France:—viz., Francis II., Charles IX., and Henry III. who was the last of the Valois. Then come the Bourbons, and we have seen the extinction of the elder branch of that house, after the reigns of Louis XVI., Louis XVIII., and Charles X., who were three brothers, and who all three became kings.

We will now relate another strange coincidence, which is to be found in one of the numerous quaint productions of the sixteenth century. We are indebted for the following anecdote to a book which was published at the Hague, under the title of "The Hand of God;" we have shortened it considerably, but by connecting the principal parts, and not losing sight of the spirit of it, we have endeavoured to show its singularity with equal effect.

One dark winter's night, when the rain was falling in torrents, an old woman who lived in a small hut in the forest of St. Germain, and who passed for a sorceress in that part of the country, was brooding over the dying embers of a wood fire, when she was suddenly roused by a loud knocking at her door; she opened it and perceived a horseman, who craved shelter from the storm; and having kindly invited him to enter, she hastened to lead his charger to a shed hard by. By the feeble glare of a smoky lamp she perceived that her guest was young, and evidently a person of distinction, and, having kindled the fire into a cheerful blaze, she hastened to spread before him a scanty supply of brown bread and cheese, which was all the provisions she had in the hut.

"I have nothing else," she said; "after having paid all the taxes by which we are burthened by the church and the king, I have little left to offer to a hungry and weary traveller."

"*Par Dieu*," said the stranger, "if ever I become king of France, my first care shall be to suppress all taxes, and to instruct the people."

"God help you," answered the old woman.

The young nobleman was approaching the table to eat, when another knock was heard at the door, and a horseman, wet to the skin, again craved for hospitality. It was granted, and having bid him welcome into her humble abode, she perceived with some surprise that her new guest was young and another person of rank.

"Ah! is that you, Henry?" said the first.

"Yes, Henry," replied the other.

Both were named Henry, and the old woman understood by their conversation that they had accompanied the king that morning with a large hunting party, and had been separated by the storm.

"Hallo! mistress," said the new guest, "have you nothing else to offer us?"

"Nothing," was the reply.

"Well, in that case we must share alike."

* *Consecutively.*

His companion did not seem to relish this arrangement very much, but glancing at the other's fierce and resolute air, he reluctantly consented to it.

They sat down opposite to one another, and were on the point of dividing the bread, when another loud knock shook the hut. It was rather a singular meeting—it was another person of rank, another youth, and another Henry. The old woman gazed at them with astonishment. The first Henry wished to conceal the supper, but the second replaced it on the table, and laid his sword beside it. The third Henry smiled.

"You do not wish to share with me," he said,—“well, I shall wait, although I feel very hungry.”

“The supper,” said the first Henry, “belongs by right to the first arrived.”

“No!” said the second, “it belongs to him who can best defend it.”

“Perhaps,” said the third, impetuously, “it will belong to him who can get possession of it.”

Hardly had he spoken these words, when the first Henry drew his dagger, and the two others their swords. Blood was about to be spilled, when a fourth knock was heard, and a fourth youth, a fourth nobleman, and a fourth Henry entered the room. At the sight of the drawn weapons, he plucked his own from the scabbard, and siding with the weakest he rashly began the attack; whilst the old woman, frightened out of her senses, hastened to conceal herself in a closet. The lamp was upset during the fray, and the four combatants were left to struggle in the dark; and after some time, which seemed an age to the old woman, the clashing of steel subsided gradually, and then ceased altogether. She then ventured to leave her concealment, and having relighted the lamp, she beheld the four young men extended on the floor. On examining their wounds, she perceived at a glance that they were but slight, and that they must have fallen more from exhaustion than loss of blood. They all rose heartily ashamed of what they had done, and bursting into a loud laugh, they said to one another—

“Come, let us finish our supper peaceably, and in friendship.”

But when they came to look for it, they found the bread on the ground, trampled upon and soiled with blood. On the other hand, the hut was in complete disorder, and the old woman, crouched in a corner, was looking fixedly at her guests.

“What are you looking at, dame?” asked the first Henry, evidently ill at ease under the steady gaze of the old crony.

“I am reading your destinies, which are plainly written on your foreheads.”

The second Henry sneeringly ordered her to reveal them, and the two others asked her good-naturedly to do the same.

“As you have all four met in this hut, so surely will your destinies be united; as you have trampled upon and soiled with blood the bread of hospitality, so surely will you trample upon and soil with blood the power which you might have shared; as you have laid waste and impoverished this hut, so surely will you lay waste and impoverish France; and as you have all four been wounded in the dark, so surely will you all four meet your deaths by treachery and violent means.”

The four young men laughed heartily at the old woman's prophecy. They were the four future heroes of the League, two as its enemies, and the others as its defenders.

The first was Henri de Condé, assassinated by his wife, at St. Jean d'Angely.

Henri de Guise, assassinated at Blois by the forty-five.

Henri de Valois (Henry III.), assassinated at St. Cloud by Jacques Clément.

And Henri de Bourbon (Henry IV.), assassinated at Paris by Ravillac.

THE FRENCH PROMPTER.

By JULES JANIN.

IMAGINE the torments of Tantalus dying with thirst in the midst of a limpid stream, of Ixion on his wheel, or of Prometheus under his eagle—picture to yourself all that is most perplexing and torturing in imprisonment or slavery, and you will have but a faint idea of the miseries of the existence of the unfortunate being to whom fickle destiny has assigned as a perpetual residence that narrow hole, the extinguisher of all poetry and sentiment, denominated the PROMPTER'S BOX.

Nevertheless, this unknown, invisible, nameless being should not be despised, for without him the dramatic art could not exist. He is the corner stone of the whole edifice. We will not now enter into the question mooted by dramatic antiquarians as to whether the prompter preceded the poet, or whether they entered into existence simultaneously. We have only to look at the signification of his French title, *le souffleur*, to be satisfied of his right to our gratitude and reverence. *Le souffle* signifies the breath, the soul, and the life; and from his despised post the Prompter gives the awakenings, the signal, the motion, the breath, the light, and the current to dramatic art. He holds the hidden wires by which the puppets of the scene are made to move. He must know everything, must foresee everything, and it is he who must previously prepare for the effect of a gesture or a speech of passion. He must be a diviner of character. He must seize with unerring tact the variations between one actor and another. He must guess at the first glance, by the gait and manner of his hero, what is his doubtful point, and rush to his aid with a sign, a look, a word, as the special case may demand. No certainty or confidence on the part of the player must for an instant of time put to sleep the watchfulness of the Prompter. He must ever keep his attention rivetted on him through all the phases of the contending passions—and then, if having reached the apex of his love, his rage, or his hatred, the eyes of the hero should assume an expression of fear, his frame tremble in the agony of doubt, and his features assume a fixed or wandering aspect, then is he lost, if the Prompter, like a dog of St. Bernard, saves him not from the abyss into which he is about to fall.

Care must be taken not to prompt too much or too little, to speak too loudly or too softly—and in this he must study the individual; and when he sends his voice to the extremity of the stage, on the other side of the wings it must be unheard.

What are the *tours de force* of our great vocalists, or the variety of sounds they produce, to the marvels accomplished by a first-rate prompter, whose voice is by turns as loud as an ophicleide, or as dulcet as a flute? The actor has but to manage and please the audience—the Prompter has the infinitely more difficult task of flattering the vanity of these tyrants in pasteboard crowns.

These trials, however, fade into insignificance before the difficulty of assisting the memory of the ladies of the stage. Who would undertake to answer for the memory of a woman? The part she knew perfectly yesterday, and the instant previously to coming upon the stage, and which she has, perhaps, already repeated before thousands of persons, she has suddenly forgotten. The sight of a new toilette worn by her rival, or a fold displaced in her own dress, will suffice to put to flight whatever of memory or intelligence she before possessed. She no longer sees, hears, understands, or speaks; and who may describe the difficulty of bringing her back, step by step, like a truant child, to the recollection of her part, and of giving the electric shock which will recal her scattered senses?

This martyr of the theatrical art acts all the leading parts simultaneously. He is, by turn, the tyrant, the noble father, the valet, the maid, the flirt, the

lover, the butt, and the hero. He holds in his hand all the threads of the plot. He weeps, he raves, he swears, he sighs, he soliloquises, he strangles, he poisons, he dies; he is in love, he marries, he is a conspirator; he is rich, he is poor, covered with glory and honours; he belongs, at the same moment, to all nations and all ages, to all griefs, to all joys. What must be the confusion of ideas in the head of this unfortunate victim! What torments must he endure, imprisoned for seven consecutive hours in his wretched den, employed in manufacturing and arranging the materials which compose what is denominated dramatic art!

We have not catalogued one-third of the miseries and annoyances of the Prompter's post. To him is most frequently intrusted the copying out of the parts for the actors; and then after enjoying this sort of relaxation for his moments of leisure, he must assist at the rehearsal—not at those which take place a few days before the piece is presented to the public, and which resembles the performance on a smaller scale; but those trials of his patience where he has to teach to the subordinates his or her lesson—while the play is yet in embryo—whether the author and actors, out of temper with each other, vent their spleen upon the Prompter, who is the scapegoat, at the same time that he is the soul of the entire proceeding.

Another circumstance ministers to his miseries. It is now the fashion to give only outlines of comedies, which the actors fill up according to their individual fancies. Imagine the conflicting demands, the alterations, the orders and counter orders, with which the auriculars of the poor Prompter are assailed. How, amidst such antagonistic interests, is he to make way, and to avoid the general torrent of indignation which will break forth against him should he happen to commit the slightest error or mistake?

The Prompter is incessantly connected with pleasure and amusement, which personally he knows not what it is to enjoy. He hears of large salaries, of benefit nights, of golden tributes, diamonds, embroidered vestments; magnificence of all descriptions constantly pass before his eyes. Meanwhile, his threadbare coat is ten years old, his waistcoat appears to lament departed glories, and his hat admits the air. Though love-making is constantly taking place before him, he never comes in for the smallest portion. Of all the triumphs in which he plays so important a part, he but participates in the noise and dust. Of all the wreaths that cover the stage he obtains not the smallest flower; and on those occasions when the actors and actresses partake of collations, the peeling of an orange, thrown maliciously into his den, is his allotment of the repast.

His life is passed in the hideous retreat upon which the musical director is constantly beating—a system of torture which all the refinement of cruelty invented by the Spanish Inquisition could not exceed!

Hitherto, I have supposed the Prompter to be an aged man; he at least would possess the advantage of having lost the illusions, the hopes, the passions, and the emotions of youth. But let us for an instant imagine a young man in such a situation. All must have observed that the younger and more charming the actress, the more she flies the Prompter's box. She desires to be completely seen—she will not conceal her pretty little feet behind the extinguisher which covers the miserable *caput* of the Prompter. On the other hand, the old, the awkward, and the ugly members of the *troupe* shelter themselves behind it. Then, how are the most charming illusions dispelled! "What renders the planet Venus so beautiful in the distance," says a celebrated astronomer, "is, that she is frightful when near." What compassion must we, then, not feel for M. Arago and the Prompter, both forced to view the "stars" in such fatal proximity? Beautiful is dramatic art in the distance, but frightful, indeed, when seen from the Prompter's box!

Let us conclude this slight sketch of a Prompter's life with the words of one of the fraternity—an old Prompter of the Comedie Francaise—to Fleury:—*"Mon cher enfant, je m'en vais; et si j'ai le bonheur que le soufflé sorte une fois de mon corps, je veux être pendu plutôt que de le faire rentrer!"*

DRAMATIC AND MUSICAL MIRROR.

Shakspeare has said, "Time was that when the brains were out, a man would die, and there an end"—and even thus would it appear to be with theatres. Drury Lane and Covent Garden, though their trains have been literally knocked out, still exist, and, like the ghost of the murdered Banquo, "push us from our stools." Lyricism and equitation have usurped the royal seats, and the warblings of the one, and the canterings at the other, have seized upon the ears, and trodden out all the bright intellectuality, the profound philosophy, and the golden poetry which, at no very backward period, were the winning charms of these once national institutions. The present efforts at the Sadler's Wells and the Marylebone Theatres, are praiseworthy and satisfactory, and have, to a certain extent, served to keep alive the flickering flame from quite expiring, but for any high and enduring purpose, they cannot avail. The remuneration can but be in an equal ratio with the sizes of the buildings, and the largest possible amount to be realised will do no more than cover the current expenditure, with an hypothetical, or, at least, but a modest gain to the proprietors. We feel that the licensing of so many minor theatres was the original cause of stopping the resources of the national drama. We were canvassing this interesting subject not many days since, with a celebrated dramatic writer and acute critic, of the good old times, when he feelingly remarked, "With what pleasure in our earlier days of dramatic criticism did we consider theatrical matters—what a relief was it from the severer labours of our profession, to direct to a play-going public what was most worthy their patronage. But those days have passed away. All the immense capital invested upon the faith of the laws has been sacrificed by the unblushing violations, which the government have not only permitted, but sanctioned, upon the property and patents, which had induced individuals to embark their money. The result is so plain that those who run may read: ruin to the proprietors, and semi-starvation to the professors of the stage. The facility with which licences have been granted, and new theatres established, has increased the number of histrionic attempters a hundred-fold, luring them from their legitimate callings of tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, weavers, &c., ultimately to become objects for union workhouses. The laws upon theatrical licensing in Great Britain are as absurd as they are pernicious; they repeal everything that might tend to the upholding of the drama, and encourage everything that can deteriorate it. Verily, they have had, and will have their reward."

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

This brilliant *troupe* has at length concentrated its strength, and devoted it, without artistic jealousies or theatrical heartburnings, to the perfect rendering of the works which have been presented. We need scarcely offer remark on the style in which Rossini's superb opera of *Semiramide* has been produced. Certainly, at no previous period has it been given with so great vocal or scenic splendour. The fine stage and complete machinery of this theatre afford advantages which no other establishment in this country possesses for the mounting of great lyrical works, in which scenery, processions, and splendour form some of the natural elements. In the instance of *Semiramide*, these additional means are of especial importance to the carrying out the design; and assuredly the rich eastern costumes, the Numidian slaves bearing the golden presents, the phalanx of warriors, the barbaric gorgeousness, and the quaint banners, and the military bands form fitting auxiliaries to enable the spectator to lend himself to the dramatic illusion. Horrible as is the story of the drama into which Rossini has interwoven his melodies, there is yet an unaccountable charm in mingling amongst the historical personages who formed the ruling characters of the court of Babylon. It is full of gloom and mysticism, and the passions and emotions, and the vices of the several characters invest the mind with a semi-dreaminess, akin to that said to be experienced by travellers upon first viewing the wonders of Elora. We are subdued by the action, but feel no human interest for the actors; and, indeed, the music of Rossini, with the single exception of the early portion of the finale to the first act, and the fine writing of the sestet, is in perfect antagonism with the sentiment of the subject. There is a want of appropriate colouring; the poem is dark, gusty, lurid, and gloomy; the music light, cheerful, voluptuous, and flowing. The minister of Belos,

the poisoner of Ninus, gurgles *cadenzi*, and indulges in vocal embroidery—the incestuous Queen warbles in love-sick strains, and luxuriates in harmonic beauties—the young warrior, Arsace, vocalises tenderly as a sighing Giovanni, beneath the lattice of his “ladie love,” and even the music allotted to the High Priest, the prophet of the land, might be appropriately arranged for the use of polkists, mazourkists, and devotees of waltzes and quadrilles. Nothing less than the marvellous talents of the artists could reconcile us to the wide differences between the subject and the musical illustration. We breathe no word against Rossini, for he wrote this opera for his countrymen, who would have deemed any true musical echo of the words as absurd; they wished for mere melody, and Rossini gave it to them in profusion. What he could produce when called upon by a higher state of the lyrical drama he has proved in his *William Tell*, a work that may worthily rank with those of Gluck, Mozart, and Beethoven. Semiramide is Grisi’s finest impersonation. Her Eastern style of beauty, the commanding presence, the almond-shaped eye, and the ringing quality of her splendid organ, all contribute to a perfect interpretation of the Assyrian Queen. Madlle. Alboni, though still beyond comparison the greatest existing *contralto*, has not entirely recovered the potency of her voice, but its beauty and its liquidity, and the facility and grace of her ornaments, are still the same. Tamburini’s voice is gone—we fear without chance of return—his style is antique and *rococo*, and his execution is a sort of chin operation, and has no more to do with true and legitimate vocalising than have the capers of a North American Indian with the graceful *poses* of Taglioni. With this exception the *Semiramide* was quite perfect.

La Donna del Lago has afforded affluent means for the individual displays of Mario, Grisi, and Alboni. King James is admirably adapted to the means of Mario, who both in power and execution has marvellously improved; he is the finest tenor of the day, and bids fair to be an accomplished actor. As Malcolm Græme, Alboni proved that she had moulted no feather of her former superiority—her power had returned, and at no former period was the audience more enthusiastic. To Tamburini, unfortunately, was assigned the Roderick Dhu, a part written for a tenor, and to which Donzelli gave wonderful effect. The result of Tamburini was a signal failure. We put in our protest against the introduction of music not belonging to the opera; upon the occasion to which we allude, Mario and Tamburini both sinned in this particular, and this in the very teeth of the boast of the establishment that every work should be given in its integrity. This should be stringently forbidden by the direction. We hear that some of the mighty works of the mighty composers are in preparation. Viardot is expected, and will complete the starry circle. The houses have been full and fashionably attended.

SURREY THEATRE.

It would seem that this admirable theatre is a sort of debateable land in the domain of the drama. Each season, as it passes in its annual round, exhibits a new phase of theatrical amusement. Opera, tragedy, melodrama, and ballet, are for a limited period in the ascendant. On Monday it commenced a new era, under the management of Mr. Kerschner, who, if we may form any present opinion from past success, will not suffer the property to lie fallow. He has commenced his reign with spirit, and has gathered around him those actors who had made the Surrey famous. *The Bohemians* is a drama of powerful interest, and exhibits the inner life of Paris with horrid fidelity. We think we have seen a version of the same piece at the Adelphi. There can be but one opinion as regards the certainty of success of the Surrey Theatre under spirited and judicious management; when these qualities have been combined it has ever been triumphant. The population is dense, and the passion for dramatic exhibitions is intense; and, hence, failure must be rather attributed to the want of skill in those at the helm, than to the fitness of the vessel, or the value of its freight. We are certain that, if common industry be used, to procure peculiar pieces, and a sufficient talent to give them due and fitting utterance, be secured, that a rich harvest may be gathered.

MARYLEBONE.

To Mrs. Warner is strictly due the first thought of devoting Sadler’s Wells to the purpose which that theatre has since so worthily carried out. After a career of deserved success, she moored her craft to the far wilds of Pancras, and pursued the same course she had adopted at the confluence of the New River. The result has succeeded, so far as the moral purpose is concerned; the finest productions have been acted in their poetical integrity, and have been presented in a style the most complete. A goodly, if not a great, company was engaged, sufficient for a fair interpretation of the works produced, and all seemed to wear a cheering aspect. We now learn that Mrs. Warner is about to abdicate the throne she has filled so worthily; we greatly regret this, for we felt that a lasting ad-

vantage would result by the adoption of legitimate plays, to the exclusion of melodramatic monstrosities. As a crowning triumph of her government, Mr. Macready has been engaged, and is now in the course of acting some of the great characters of the immortal plays of Shakspeare; a worthy conclusion of the noble attempt to drag the stage from its present slough of despond.

The Easter dramatic offerings have been more than ordinarily effective. At the Haymarket, Horace Walpole's clever romance has been turned inside out by the punning pen of a Beckett. The huge casque and towering plume, and the giant cased in armour, afford a great scope for the marvellous and the mirthful; while, at the Lyceum, Planche has gracefully burlesqued the prettiest legend of the "*Metamorphoses*"—the loves and adventures of Theseus and Ariadne. At the Adelphi *The Fountain of Thea*, a charming thought, beautifully elaborated with all scenic appliances. At Drury Lane, wonderful is the equitation and wonderful the elasticity and the daring of the equestrians forming the *troupe* of M. Franconi. There would appear such a love of horses in Englishmen as almost to amount to instinct. To the races, so superior in this country to those which take place on the Continent, may be ascribed the superiority of our breed to those of any other nation, hardly excepting that of Arabia. The out-door exercise which this induces, and the excitement of the sport which it causes, may be cited as peculiarly English. To foster this feeling in the breasts of her children, her Majesty has made it an invariable rule to afford them the amusement which exhibits equestrianism. Prince Albert and the royal children, almost as a matter of course, have honoured Franconi's with a visit, upon which occasion the direction strained every nerve to render the performance satisfactory. The royal box was regally decorated, and the *troupe* and animals, upon this complimentary occasion, appeared in the most gorgeous array. The housings were superb, and the coats of the horses rivalled the gloss of the finest satin. The *petit Loisset* and little Marie Anato were especial favourites with the royal children, and the comic *apropos* and physical feats of M. Auriol and his elastic son, excited roars of laughter which would have reflected honour on the merest plebeian. The innumerable leaps through floral hoops executed by Madlle Palmyre, while the horse is galloping at full speed, caused loud demonstrations from the royal box. Madlle. Caroline went through the evolutions of the *haute école*. The horse was trained after the by-gone system, in which the martingale is used. The present bit-practice causes the mouth of the horse to become so tender that he is necessitated to keep the neck in a continual curve, which, though it may add gracefulness to the appearance, cannot but render its usage oppressive and painful. A grand *entrée* of knights and ladies in picturesque costumes closed the performance. The houses have been well attended, and the horses continue to draw. The interest of M. Jullien in this establishment has ceased, and Mr. Beale, the well-known music publisher, of the firm of Cramer, Beale, and Co., is now the lessee. Cremorne has opened its sylvan shades; here music and mirth, and Terpsichore, and aerial voyages, and aquatic gambols are rife. The gardens bear an entirely new aspect: gravelled walks and green swards rival the velvet in smoothness, and parterres of gay and sweet-odoured flowers regale the senses. The orchestra is excellent, and all that can minister to the pleasure seeker is here presented in rich abundance.

POLYTECHNIC.

This excellent institution has re-opened its portals to the public, with a vast accession of attractions, each of which claims especial mention. We must be content, however deserving every department may be of a full and amplified notice, to give a somewhat general inkle of the almost endless treats here provided for the young and the old. We will first most cheerfully accord our meed of praise to the admirable judgment which has been exercised in the re-arrangement of all that which is not new and that which is, in the mechanical and artistic departments. In the mechanical, many working models of patents, but recently sealed, are to be found; thus enabling the scientific world at once to see—that is, to some extent—what is going on, and thus save many an ardent and ingenious mind from bestowing its valuable time and attention on that which has, mayhap, been effected before. The same class of talented persons is likewise afforded the opportunity of carrying out to perfection many things which are here but hints, or in too incipient a state to prove more than curious. We earnestly desire, from these and other reasons equally obvious, to see more of these working models, the limits of the society in this respect being capable of considerable extension and of commensurate usefulness. The philosophical toys, and the lectures upon the rudiments of science, are all very well; and although there be much in these which could be well dispensed with, we presume that such is necessary for the amusement of a considerable portion of the shilling public who, although listless and unproductive, contribute to a fund without which the more rational

portion could scarcely be provided. Dr. Ryan lectures upon "The Breakfast Table," in which he gives a history of the table-cloth, from the growth of the flax to its introduction to the parlour; the best methods of making tea and coffee—in which, by the bye, excellent opportunities present themselves, and are not altogether unheeded, of giving a lift to some few inventors of registered urns, patent percolators, &c.,—the process of toasting bread, of making butter,—the growth and properties of watercress; the natural habits of the "Finnun haddy" and the anchovy; the nutritious qualities of the English egg, and its preservation from the foreign yoke, and, it may be, the manufacture of London milk; all forming a comfortable intellectual meal, which is somewhat greedily swallowed by an audience right hungry for knowledge.

The Polytechnic is assuredly one of the most interesting of our exhibitions; and its growing prosperity is flattering evidence of its utility in the neighbourhood of a city the inhabitants of which are becoming daily more alive to the value of an insight into the nature and economy of the things by which their comforts are rendered greater and their necessities provided for.

THE COLOSSEUM.

"These are tenuous times," exclaims Hodge, in the farce, and men should be careful in dealing out that which may add to the large pile of fright already around us. The announcement by large posters upon every wall and hoarding of "The Removal of London by Moonlight," had far from a soothing tendency; but all fear is removed now that the innocent nature of the declaration is known. Nor are the proprietors of the Colosseum about to shoot the Queen of Night, as some may think; but, on the contrary, the Herculean labour is undertaken to make room for a new city. That France should be glad at the present moment to get a comfortable location in the Regent's-park few would doubt; and, therefore, they may not be surprised to hear that capital lodgings are provided for Paris in the Colosseum. John Bull's hospitality is notorious—here he positively turns himself out, to give more room to his neighbour. The Conservatories, the Swiss Cottage, the Galleries of Sculpture all look as fresh as ever, and the Fairy Cave as brilliant as the first day it was thrown open to astonish and delight.

DIORAMA.

Mount *Ætna* is the subject chosen for the present season. It is painted by M. Diosse, a pupil of M. Daguerre. The view is taken from the ruins of the theatre at Naucrmina. Three effects are produced:—moonlight, sunlight, and the eruption of the mountain, rendered more forcible by surrounding gloom. These three several aspects appear to owe nothing to exaggeration, and the best talents of the artist and ingenuity of the mechanist have combined to the most successful issue. It may not be known to the general reader how this marvellous semblance to nature is produced. The pictures are placed at distances from the spectator, proportioned to the angle at which he would view the actual objects; and, in the absence of the means to perceive this distance, and having no connecting objects to operate as a scale towards the direction of his judgment in comparing quantities, he yields irresistibly to the magic of the painter's skill, and feels the illusion to be complete. This successful illusion is not alone the attraction of the exhibition, it has further claim to applause from the changes that occur in pictures, so decided and true to nature that the mind is led to doubt that they are the effect of art. The present exhibition is one of great and varied beauty, and will delight in equal proportion to any, even the best, of past seasons.

COSMORAMA.

The entrance of this exhibition has no very great pretensions; and the most eager sight-seer might pass it by without a thought, so little does that without suggest the excellencies provided within. Here the power of the locomotive is beaten—for, from St. Peter's to Mount St. Bernard it is but a minute's walk. *Presto!*—the great Sphinx stands before you; and from the site of this monster may be seen Klutchee, in Kamtschatka, Mont Blanc, and Berne, without straining the optic nerve or tiring the retina. The Genoa Crucifix, carved most exquisitely in ivory, is likewise beneath this roof; and although we are not going to commit ourselves to the story which is gratuitously given with the exhibition of it, we can safely say that, viewed as a work of art, it possesses the most genuine claims upon the attention of the connoisseur. The philanthropic Soyer is, moreover, about to rule the roast here, he having laid out a large room, with carved frames, for an artistic banquet,—at which, alas! would that the principal preparer of the feast, his lamented wife, could have presided. Most of our readers have, doubtless, seen the plates; here will be found in a few days the originals—provided for the taste and from the *palette*—from which such plates were taken. In the exhibition of the pictures of Mr. Soyer, the *chef* has a charitable motive. May it meet with success!

MIRROR OF FINE ARTS.

SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS.

"It is easy to find fault" is an accepted axiom: not so in art; at least, not logically, critically so. It is much easier to praise, and a much more pleasant duty. Praise is accepted mostly without the reasons which induce it; the exercise of fault-finding necessarily calls forth the why and the wherefore. The critic, therefore, were he to select the less onerous side of his task, would choose that which would involve the least burdensome consequences. To dash off a report of an exhibition of art with a lavish distribution of encomiums, like sugared comfits amidst a mob upon an Italian jubilee, with here and there an indiscriminate buffet or two by way of cayenne, or balance to the sweet, may be one way of getting rid of a task as important to the public as it is to art and artists, and equally of serious consideration to the honour and efficiency of those who are entrusted with the obligation. "Praise undeserved" being "Censure in disguise," never told with greater force than in art. Praise undeserved may be seen to be such by all but the one most interested in the expression of truth. Truth to an artist, whether he be young or matured in his profession, involves advice,—the conviction of others that he be in the right path—the warning monition that he is pursuing a wrong one. Praise, to a tyro, is called encouragement; to the matured, approval. How cautiously, then, ought it to be dealt! Encouragement in a doubtful course may lead to disappointment—approval of error to its continuance, and its endless perpetuation in those that confidently follow. In this we trace the first cause of the wide-spread mischief that is abroad. Such-and-such an one's pictures were highly reported upon last year; they were selected as prizes (by whom?) of the Art Union: "He uses bitumen and brown pink in his shadows, paints his sky with turpentine, leaves his figures just indicated and sketchy, shows here and there the mark of the tool, rubs in his glazings with his thumb, and scrapes the higher lights with his palette-knife." Here, then, is an amount of knowledge for the would-be successful candidates for market-honours; and, lo! the following season covers the walls of the exhibition-room with acres of canvass, all vying with each other which shall be the nearest—in imaginative expression, in a close adherence to nature? No!—in the nearest proximity to Mr. ———'s style. Perhaps not one of these copiers of another's peculiarities meets with the desired goal. Some one else obtains the laurels. His pictures are singular for their prismatic effects—"Turneresque"—all form is merged into colour:—"See, I can hang it upside down, and it looks as well one way as the other." "His ground is covered with perennial snow throughout the seasons—his skies are the gorgeous hues reflected from a prism—his foliage hot browns, balanced by the coldest greens: harmony is attempted by extremes, and the picture is not complete until every colour of the palette has found a place—somewhere." Here again is food for imitative art. Painting in and in, until the web of chaotic error becomes so entangled that not a thread of originality remains to relieve the mass of servile imitation from its inextricable worthlessness. We sorely regret that these observations are directed with purposed force to the landscape portion of an exhibition having the high prestige of a royal charter, and numbering amongst the initiative those whom we must, in impartial justice, class as the most zealous adherents to "copyism."

Commencing with the large room, we find Count D'Orsay exhibiting the head of *Our Saviour*, which has been painted with great care, but in character or treatment of subject evinces nothing but what has been done often before.

The Prison Door (No. 7), by Mrs. J. Macleod, presented an opportunity for making a picture of interest, which has been marred by the neglect in having a fitting model from which to draw the drapery, which is crude in colour, and does not fall in natural folds. There is merit in the face and an earnestness of expression which is suggestive of far better things.

No. 9, *R. Nightingale*, from Wordsworth's "White Doe of Rylston," is noticeable for its strange effect. It appears as though it had been painted thinly on a dark slate, and that the hue of the slate was making itself manifest throughout.

No. 10, *Two Children*, by Mr. Bowness, should have been kept at home.

Mr. Tennant's pictures are at all times deserving notice, although we fear he is not altogether free from the 'phobia' we have alluded to. His *English River Scene* (11) is well chosen and nicely treated; here and there a little too washy and laboured. The art of knowing when and where to leave off has to be learned by others besides Mr. Tennant. 128, *On the Wye*, is far better and picturesque. Again, 248, *Monmouth and Chap-stow*, is a pleasing specimen of the artist's power; and 349, 366, 546, 578, *The Ferry Boat*, more especially will give a very fair notion of his varied excellencies. The latter is a delicious bit of nature, and the figures are introduced with a kindred feeling for the beauties with which they are surrounded. There is a quiet ease about everything in this frame that wins attention, and causes one to turn again after quitting it.

Mr. H. Lancaster has five subjects. The best, 115, *A Sea View*, which is fresh and vigorous, has the scarce quality of being like what it is intended to represent, and its painter has been content to use the colours, and the colours only, to be met with in the natural scene. A little more variety in the larger waves would have added to its merit. *Boat on the Scheldt* is not so fortunate. It lacks truth, mainly caused by the chalkiness of the lights. *A River Scene* (269), and *On the French Coast* (464), are average specimens of Mr. Lancaster's easel, in which there are parts which display no ordinary capabilities.

Whatever faults Mr. Woolmer may possess, it may be said they are at least his own. His overweening love of colour carries him headlong, at times, into strange vagaries, which are obviously intended to be poetical, but in most cases falling far short of their aim, leave but the notion of a large ambition thwarted by the withdrawal of the necessary supplies. His illustration of the *Lake of Pergusa* has evidently received much more of studious thought than he generally bestows, and his efforts have been waited on by a commensurate success. Still it is more redolent of "prettiness" than of poetry; yet it carries to some considerable distance the imagination, and we will be thankful for the lift. *The First Appearance* (205), a maiden startled by the appearance of Cupid on the bed quilt, will have its admirers. It's a quaint, artless little canvass, and is evidently destined for the *burin*. *Evening in the Alps* (241) is good, taken piecemeal, but, as a whole, sadly deficient in unity. This is caused by an apparently restless desire to seize upon every object upon which to load the hues of the palette. Let us instance the coat of the pilgrim. Had this been grey, it would have become an eye to the picture and a resting-place for the observer, instead of which it adds to the endless fritter, like so many gad-like flies before the vision. A weary palmer might at least have been spared the weight of all the colours of the rainbow upon his back. *Reading Dante* (323), *The Duenna* (386), *The Pilgrims at the Well* (366), and *The Futile Disguise*, are additional instances of over, and consequently unnatural, colouring straining vainly after the poetical. More attention to the female faces of his subjects would render the works of Mr. Woolmer of additional value. A handsome face may cover a multitude of sins in nature—in art, it may not plead in vain for a few faults.

Mr. S. B. Pyne, who has many followers in the Society of British Artists' "School," and who is in part a follower himself of others out of it, has sent nine pictures. He has struck out for himself a style almost peculiarly his own (*maigre a bite o' the hand* of the "Turner" 'phobia), and which style, from its novelty and attractiveness, and its marketable qualities, has provoked countless imitators. "Pyneish" is a term already adopted in London modern art phraseology. Mr. Pyne's style is essentially a "manner," of which the mechanical elements are lime and treacle; but no man living can do more and better with lime and treacle than he. The power which in Mr. Pyne is in the greater extent original, and elicits admiration, in the hands of others gives positive offence, if it does not provoke contempt. Making every allowance for these eccentricities, much that is poetic may be found in his works; and although they would scarcely bear the test of engraving, of being translated into black and white—a process which would have for its result plates apparently unfinished, and needing filling in—they almost ever have a high intrinsic value, and possess no mean claims as pictures. *Entrance to the Menai Straits, Storm Clearing off, Opposite the Setting Sun*—by-the-bye, what a number of setting suns there are in this exhibition!—(58) is an extremely clever production, and would go far to induce us to recal our remarks touching engraving. How tastefully is every part treated. We are almost induced to forget the treacle and the lime; but, truth to say, they are used but sparingly here, and where so, with consummate artistic judgment. *Pollanza—Italy* (108), is only remarkable for its close likeness to Turner's peculiarities, and the absence of any one of the artist's, saving the careless chalky dashes upon the water meant for "sunny forms," but being white-lead (our familiar veritable lime), unmistakable. *Mill at Plass y Nant, North Wales* (240), very, very beautiful. *Shore at Littlehampton, Sussex* (359), another gem. *Thames Recollections—The New Custom House* (480). Wherefore

this title? There is nothing in the portrayal but what may be found there at any moment. Wherefore, then, *Recollections*?—wherefore *New Custom House*? Because, forsooth! the Custom House *must* be painted white—the majesty of lime demands it—so the title must be made subservient to the picture. Or wherefore is the ancient hostelry of Simpson's, famed for its fish dinners, painted white too?—that ever had a dingy exterior. Which, then, is the master here, lime or Pyne? *Pallanza on the Lago Maggiore* (634), a water-colour painting. Like his oils but in one respect, the white paper left for lights being far more warm and agreeable than those in oil pigment.

Mr. Alfred Montague is one of the most rapidly rising young artists of the day. His productions here testify to his talent and industry. They all have allusion to Holland or its immediate vicinity, and most of them are characterised by great faithfulness of detail, conveyed to the canvass with a fine, firm, unerring touch, both broad and rich. His smaller pictures are the best. He is great in little, less in greater, and little or nothing in the greatest. Take *A Dutch Milk Boat* (71) as the first (saving a tinge of the Bright school); and *Dort, from the Ferry* (176), as the last. Can anything be more sweet than the one—more inane than the other? The lesser works, of which there are several here, all bear witness to this fact, and point, with direct intention, to where his greatest talents lie. Ours are not picture-purchasing times, or we should have found the ticket "sold" to more of those of cabinet size.

In the notice to artists which prefaces the catalogue appears this sentence—"No unfinished work can be admitted into the exhibition, unless as a sketch, to be so described in the Catalogue;" and yet we find, in contravention of such law, one of its members, Mr. Hassell, hanging *The Village of Aldershot, Hants* (66), upon its walls. The cart, the figures in it, and part of the landscape itself, are merely denoted. The same remark cannot be made upon all the rest of his productions; but a far less excusable one of pre-meditated copyism of Mr. Pyne is painfully apparent in *The Old Tile-Kilns at Aldershot* (167). *Cesar's Camp on Brickbury Hill* (408) is another unfinished picture by Mr. Hassell. If considered otherwise by him, he clearly mistakes the time and place to leave off. Mr. Hassell has no ordinary powers of pleasing, and his judgment of selection is, moreover, that of an accomplished artist; it is a pity, therefore, that he should coquette with his own, or make free with the styles of others. Why cannot he always take the independent course he has adopted in *Stonehenge* (60), simple to an extreme, winning to an excess? Did he think the subject unworthy to wear the mantle of another, and thus left it to appeal in its naked, natural, lovely loneliness?

No. 20 is a clever sketch of *A Gleaner*, obviously taken from the life. The handling is broad and pure, and Mr. D. W. Dean, if he be but a young artist, has the elements from which may arise a great one. *A Market Girl* (56) is another from the living model, equally good, and *An Irish Girl* (597) a third, with similar commendatory claims.

The Hay Cart—showery weather (27), H. M. Anthony, is a glaring combination of the manner of Turner, Bright, Müller, and Pyne—so defined, indeed, that the canvass might be mapped out and allotted to their several prototypes. A large picture, by the same artist, *Landscape and Figures*, makes as free with Mulready in the objects of its middle distance. The trees take great liberties with Turner, and in one respect leave the author of the "Pleasures of Hope" far behind; they have two distinct foliages upon the same stem. 222 and 585 are but little less free from these offences; but in 533, *A Mountain Stream*, he seizes upon Pyne with a nervous and determined clutch, as though in the fixed intent to stick by his colours until the last.

Mr. J. A. Puller has three little paintings, all worthy of remark, but far from equal to what he can do.

Mr. Zeitter's works all bear the same stamp; but it is his own die, and if he is too profuse, it is not with another man's coin, 'tis with his own. Comparatively, no little virtue here—he, too, rollicks in colour and throws it about with no unsparing hand. The rags of his gipsies are always clean, and of a material which a good housewife would prize for their fast-colour properties. Mr. Zeitter has to learn that the human eye, however black it may be upon a near approach, becomes grey by distance and the intervention of atmosphere, which tones down and softens all things. His best picture here is *A Dutch Ferry Boat* (263).

Mr. T. Clater's subjects are not altogether happily chosen. His finish is, however, unexceptionable, and plainly tells us that he has been looking well into the best masters of the Dutch school. Every morsel of his studies are painted from the objects themselves; and although he does not draw largely upon his own imagination, he seizes with considerable judgment each adjunct, whether accidental or otherwise, that may prove of use to the general design.

E. J. Niemann has but one picture, *Scene at Brill* (118), a clear half of which is ex-

tremely well painted, the other of more than average ability. The portion we admire is to the right of the spectator, the distance, old cottages in the middle distance, and the broken foreground. The distance is especially fine—indeed most of this artist's works excel in this particular, a most difficult one, and so seldom well treated by the landscape painter, many of whom appear to avoid subjects which involve the task. Niemann, on the contrary, seems to know that he wields this rare power, and he positively revels in the far off. Giving to a limited canvass the deceptive effect of space is amongst the highest attainments to which the painter of art can aspire, and when this is combined with a classic perception of the beauties of form—of what to select, and of what to lay aside, it needs but one thing to perfect the master. That *little* one thing is unflinching devotion to nature's self, to paint almost at all times out of doors—morning, noon, and night; spring, summer, autumn—ay, and winter too. Nature is a bride that will well repay the wooing. But she must be wooed at *her* own home, not in the chamber or studio of the artist. Neglect her for a day, and she has quitted you for a day—neglect her for a year, and the portraits are not her portraits; they are of a school or clique, and Nature disowns them.

Somewhat of the success of Mr. Niemann's clear atmospheric effects are attributed to the use of silica colours, but like Isaak Walten's fiddle and fiddle-stick, it must be the knowledge and methods of using them after all.

The Trial of Socrates (142), W. Salter, could not have been a greater one to the philosopher than its representation has been to ourselves. We dismiss the picture; but must find the artist guilty of elaborating a piece of worsted work, and framing it.

Waterfall at Haeg (124), W. West, is a charming nook in nature; if there be anything to criticise it is the shadows, which are not sufficiently transparent.

We have, we believe, now touched upon nearly all that courts remark. There are a vast number of others too far removed from criticism to occupy our space; did they not occupy that of the society 'twould be better for themselves and for that body. J. W. Allen's works are amongst the few that may be excepted from this apparent sweeping observation, and so are both the Wilsons, and W. Fowler, and Boddington, by whom is 500, *The Path to the Church*, redolent in beautiful passages; and a little *Landscape* by T. Dingle (43); another by W. Oakes; and *The Victim of Sin and Death* (197), by La-tills, may be enumerated amongst the honourable exceptions.

We have now said enough, and trusting that the lecture we have read at the commencement of this article will have its due weight with the several members of the society, we take leave of Suffolk-street for this year, in the fervent hope of better fruits at the next season.

THE FREE EXHIBITION OF MODERN ART.

THIS exhibition has arisen from the exigency of the period. The exclusiveness of the Royal Academy as a corporation and the limited space at its disposal have contributed to throw the greater proportion of the British Artists upon their own resources. Considering that this is but the second year, and that the spirited band have been compelled to evacuate the comparatively small rooms of the Egyptian Hall for the more ample quarters of the Chinese Exhibition, the promoters of the movement may be fairly congratulated upon their having attained the broad and direct road that leads to a successful issue. We must acknowledge that we recognise those elements which mainly contribute to so desirable a consummation, not so much from the talents as a painter possessed by each individual member composing the initiative, but from the fact that such gift is grafted upon, and fused with, business notions not inconsistent with the noblest pursuits, and the clearly-apparent firm determination to afford the project an uninterrupted trial of some few years. Taken in the aggregate, our artists are characterised by a highly sensitive and cautious, not to add suspicious, turn of mind. They are to an immeasurable extent, beyond all other communities, jealous of being associated with failure or in anywise compromised or committed to any one thing or part of a thing which has not a certainty, or next to a certainty, as its elementary basis. This sensitiveness, not necessarily the attribute of a refined mind, is peculiarly such in reference to artists, who have ever been tacitly recognised by their fellow-men as endowed by nature with the fullest share of enlightenment and honour. In corroboration of this, mark the astonishment which society gives expression to at any dereliction from the strict line of probity by any one of its members! Long may art thus be united with truth; the cautious feeling of the way while thus in company cannot be otherwise than complimentary to her companion.

Confidence once obtained, recruits are never wanting. This confidence, if we may

judge from the exhibition we have just left, is manifesting itself, and will grow and enlarge with every accession of co-operation and numbers.

The room of the late Chinese Exhibition is admirably adapted for the exposition of pictures, and is certainly the best, if not the largest, we know of in Britain—indeed, its light could not be better adjusted; falling from an angle of about 45 degrees from both sides of the roof, its rays are met and refracted upon the walls beneath with the mellowest influence. In this respect it is incomparably better than the Louvre, where the light descends but from one side, and its rays are necessarily intercepted by the spectator.

Some of the pictures have been exhibited before, and one or two at Westminster. But such portion is scarcely worthy of remark in respect to numbers, which in all amount to four hundred and forty. In this number there are many upon which praise would be abused, but the majority—and a very large majority—are of a class of merit, although not "high" as an order, quite equal to the average of the most flattering season of the Royal Academy. This is saying much for an institution but two years old, and in making the statement we may be probably and naturally suspected of "colouring,"—a suspicion which will be dispelled by a visit to Hyde-park-corner.

We have only sufficient space in the present number to give a list of some of the names of the contributors. In our next we have promised ourselves the gratification of entering fully into their merits *seriatim*.

H. K. Browne (Phiz) begins the catalogue—why does he not paint more?—and is followed by Lucas, Passmore, Middleton, Niemann, McLan, and Mrs. McLan, Dibdin, Gilbert, Robins, Fowler, Duvall, Davis, G. A. Williams, Hulme, Salter, Mrs. J. Robertson, Lander, R.S.A., J. E. Lander, Kidd, Marshall, Claxton, Lucy, McInnes, Bell, Browning, Wingfield, Peel, Sayers, Miss Ann Paulson, Stump, Bentley, C. Varley, Sidney, Percy, &c.

The Art Union has intimated its intention to include this exhibition with the others from which prize-holders may select their pictures. It may be added that the term "Free" has been adopted with a future intent; on and after the 26th June it will be thrown gratuitously open to the public.

THE BOWYER BIBLE GRAND CLUB SUBSCRIPTION.

The history of the Bowyer Bible is the history of a life. Endowed with the purest love of art and directed by a faultless judgment, Mr. Bowyer in early years determined to bring together each and every illustration it was possible to discover of the sacred text. How his devotional zeal was rewarded the galleries of Mrs. Parkes, of Golden-square, bear open and willing evidence. Setting aside for awhile the religious importance of this collection, in itself a theme for the most earnest pen, let us view it in a national light; for in such phrase do we feel ourselves imperatively called upon to do so. No one country throughout the globe has ever laid at the shrine of its religion such an art-offering as this. Composed of the graphic interpretations of Scripture according to the spirit which was in them, have thousands of master minds thus welled forth their founts of genius to render fit homage to Him who can redeem. Each gushing evidence of heavenly love meeting here in one broad, deep, and mighty lake. The tribes who when earth was young ceaselessly piled huge and ponderous stone on stone until death alone summoned them from their religious toil were not more intent to raise a glorious and colossal structure for the admiration of after ages than were the builders of this gigantic work. Would that the gifted crowd of labourers—from Raffaele,

"Whose thoughts towards heaven,—to which they were akin,
Ennobling his whole being—touching chords
Of holiest sweetness—purifying sin—
Raising a deathless moral that records
The Majesty of truth, in *finis* surpassing words!"—
from Michael Angelo—

"Who steeped his spirit in the richest dyes
That nature's wealthiest fountain could bestow;
The tastes, the passions, sentiments, which show
The eloquence of colours, and those fine
Mysterious sympathies which thrill and glow,
Like stars which burn and tremble as they shine,—
Gifting the painter's sight with glories all divine!"—
down to West, Reynolds,—

"—names
My country!—dear—ay, doubly dear, to thee;
Gems of thine own heart's mine, whose lustre shames
The earlier record of thine history;—
High denizens of immortality,—
Enduring pillars of their native shore—
Whose memories are a people's legacy!
A rich bequeathment, and beloved the more,
For they were good as great,—brave spirits born to soar."

Yes; would that this gifted crowd could behold their cherished offering bound together with one kindred sole intent—to bedeck the Book from which they draw their inspiration and their love! All honour, then, to the architect who has thus brought from far and near the material for so rare a structure,—honour most cheerfully accorded, though not unmingled with regret that upon the sportive waves of chance the book is thrown; and that, mayhap its boundless worth be cast upon some foreign shore, some thoughtless avaricious hand to seize the laden prize and ruthlessly scatter the sacred spoil—to mutilate its holy unity!

Here would be a vital thrust at a nation's pride. Here is evidence strong of a nation's art-paralysis.

But we will hope a better fate for a casket so replete with unselfish sympathies. Its security would have done honour to a British Museum. A temple erected for its especial reception might have been amongst the patriotic boasts of the future historian. But we have to deal with facts as we find them, with the knowledge that by the payment of a trifling sum a chance is at once insured of becoming the owner of what would render the most insignificant of consequence to his fellow man—attract the society of the connoisseur—raise the envy of the mere collector, obtain for him the intimacy of artists, and a wide-spread interest amongst the truly devout.

As only one, however, can become the envied possessor of so unappreciable a treasure, Mrs. Parkes has providentially made preparation against utter disappointment. No one subscriber can lose. Besides there being several other prizes of great value, encased in richly-carved cabinets from the designs of some of our first artists, every donor receives a self-selected number of high-class engravings equal to the amount of his monetary offering, thus carrying away, at the period of his becoming a member, a guarantee against the slightest positive deprivation.

It may be added that the galleries in Golden-square are thrown gratuitously open to the curious, and that a reception is insured free from offensive solicitation; and that, moreover, names of enlightenment and moral worth bear spontaneous testimony to the probity of so interesting a movement in art.

SERIES OF ETCHINGS BY EDWIN LANDSEER, R.A.

Edwin Landseer is the most sincere of painters. Truth is his artistic idol; and to her his whole professional life has been earnestly devoted. In the series of etchings which a fortunate accident has added to the cabinets of the connoisseur, this fact is unmistakably manifest. It is now nearly a quarter of a century since the master hand conveyed these evidences of a master mind to the enduring copper, and each and all bear witness to the strong devotedness of the artist to perpetuate that which should have truth as one of its valuable elements. Thus early a close adherence to nature is evinced. After years have but served to bring her painter-worshipper yet nearer. It is no marvel that some of the single impressions of these plates, stamped as they are by the impress of genius, should have been the cause of anxious competition for possession amongst the conversant in art, and that sums equal to what have been given for scarce old etchings should have been cheerfully accorded for these. Now that they are published by M. Gambart they are no less intrinsically valuable, whether as a school for the guidance of the young aspirant who would assay his talents by the aid of the etching point, or as an acquisition to the portfolio of the man of elegant discernment. To enter fully into the merits of each of the set of twelve would occupy a very extended space; but it may be enough to say that the greater portion of them, were they the production of Landseer but now, instead of so many years ago, would not be other than honourable to his more matured and highly-gifted powers. We would *en passant* especially point out the singularly successful attempt to give to the dead eye of the stag in the etching of *The Eagle the colour of film*. Such and similar daring do most of these gems exhibit, and the result, in nearly every case has been equally happy.

LITERARY MIRROR.

ROSE, BLANCHE, AND VIOLET. By G. H. Lewes. In three volumes. London: Smith and Elder, 1848.

The novel before us is one which could not have been the production of an ordinary mind; full of passion, thorough acquaintance with the human heart, of a deep-seated philosophy, it bears upon it the stamp of genius, and could have been conjured into existence only by a master hand. Our author displayed in his first work of fiction considerable powers, but the promise budding in the pages of "Ranthorpe" has been more than fulfilled in the novel before us. The characters are all real, and evidently have been sketched from actual life. There seems indeed, to have been a type for every one of the individuals who enact a part in this deeply-interesting narrative. There are incidents of many kinds, scenes of a startling character, highly-graphic groupings following closely one upon another. But that which will recommend it most strongly to the class which support novels, is the fact that it is essentially a love story; not false love, not the high-flown, unreal attempt at love dwelt upon in the pages of the ordinary novelist, but such love as one meets with in life. Mr. Lewes displays an intimate acquaintance with the human heart, and therefore possesses that command over his materials without which no startling novel can be written, none which will be lasting in its effect upon the mind. Few novels of the present day aim at producing anything beyond a mere passing effect; but the influence of the work before us will not pass as we close upon the last page. We are induced by it to reflect and moralise upon our condition in this life, and to ask ourselves the question, how can it be bettered?—how can we turn it to most advantage? Mr. Lewes has three heroines to deal with, the daughters of a gentleman, who after his first wife's death, thinks fit to marry again, thus placing his children in the enviable position of step daughters. Mrs. Meredith Vyner is a young woman of extraordinary fascination, though by no means faultless beauty. Slightly deformed, she yet exercises the most dangerous power upon men. Towards her husband she affects to display the utmost tenderness, and treats his children with apparently great kindness. The two elder daughters are completely blinded by her attentions, and think that no person on earth is more amiable than their mamma, but Violet, the youngest, the most splendid character in the novel, sees through her and strives to reveal her in all her hideous moral deformity to the eyes of her sisters. This, however, she cannot at once accomplish—time performs for her what persuasion cannot do, and at length Mrs. Meredith Vyner falls in the estimation of all. This is an entirely original creation; she is unlike other novel heroines, unlike them in her conception and carrying out. Her very wickedness is original and striking, and the gradual rise and fall of the woman from her youth to her more mature age is ably imagined and conceived. An irrevocable destiny pursued her, and overwhelms her at last, but irrevocable only because she braves and beckons it on. With all the elements for achieving good in her hands—she yet wilfully persists in error, with no cause, no palliative to make us sympathise with her. Violet is a very splendid creation. In her are developed a fine, noble-spirited woman, who will sacrifice, if necessary, all the dearest impulses and affections of her heart before the shrine of virtue, and what appears to her a stern necessity. Blanche is a sweet girl, as gentle, as loving, and as amiable as can well be conceived; but a doubt arises in our mind whether such a girl, loving Cecil as she did, would have afterwards consented to marry Captain Heath. Cecil is a weak, vicious man, whom we pity, nevertheless, in his misfortunes, and sympathise with his fate. Under better circumstances, he might have been a better man. The scene detailing his death is one of the finest in the book. The horror of the catastrophe creeps through every line. We know that the anxious wife in vain will count the hours and watch for his return, and our deepest anxiety and interest is created for her. Captain Heath is a noble, disinterested man—noble in his very imperfections. We may endeavour to particularise scenes and characters, but our words will but feebly convey our ideas of the novel. To say that it is the most striking of the season is to say nothing. It sur-

passes in interest any that has been written for years, and will, therefore, be eagerly sought and read when the time usually allotted to the life of a novel is past—the season. It will be read again and again for its beauty, its interest, and the intimate knowledge it conveys of the human heart, its inmost workings, its hopes and fears, its secret thoughts and hidden mysteries. The stride which Mr. Lewes has taken from “Ranthorpe” to “Rose, Blanche, and Violet” is such as could only have been taken by a man of genius. We strongly recommend this novel to our readers as one which will amply repay a most careful perusal.

HOURS OF RECREATION. A Collection of Poems. By Charles S. Middleton. London : Smith, 1848.

No one could peruse the modest and unpretending preface prefixed to the volume before us without entertaining a profound sympathy with the young poet whose productions we are now called upon to notice. He does not affect to assume to himself any position as a right; he only asks to be judged without those bitter and venomous remarks which the thoughtless critic sometimes so unsparingly scatters, in order to repress the ambition of those aspiring spirits who aim at securing a place in their country's annals. But let our author take courage. Let him remember that the shafts of criticism assailed Byron in his earlier days. But what did they do? They did not crush his spirit, or disincline him from pursuing his noble task; they only aroused his ambition, and made him turn upon his adversaries such a fire of sarcasm and reproach as made them tremble. His ardour was roused to the highest pitch, and he afterwards proved that he was capable of high and noble undertakings. Let, then, our poet, we repeat, take courage, nor suffer himself to be cast down, should he meet with disapproval at the outset. The poet's nature is highly sensitive and nervous; it is the very attribute of his inspired genius which renders him so. Living in that world which their imagination conjures up, and which is peopled with beings of a finer mould than they jostle against in their contact with the busy practical throng, poets are sensitively alive to the smile of ridicule or the curl of scorn, which proceeds from envy oftener than from real contempt. But our author must remember that it is only by the exercise of our own will, or that moral power within us which never deserts us upon an emergency, that we can overcome the obstacles which oppose our progress in this world. The inert and those content with mediocrity calmly stand behind the stumbling-blocks which lie in their way, and make no effort to rise, and overcome them. The great and the noble boldly leap, and venture. They look calmly in the face of fortune, and scare her by the steadfastness of their gaze, until, abashed and crest-fallen, she opens for them a way to the goal whither their aspirations tend. Our author, then, must rely firmly upon his moral courage, and must, by degrees, seek to shake from his mind the conviction that haunts it, that because he does not now occupy a proper position, or the one destined for him by fortune to occupy, he will not meet with the success he deserves. Merit WILL be recognised, such is its overwhelming force, in spite of all obstacles, and Mr. Middleton may therefore hope courageously. It is not because we do not love poetry that its voice is silent amongst us, but because there are few poets existing. It is absurd and discouraging to say that because this is a practical age men must repress their poetical genius. Let it be ever so practical, there are still moments when the soft voice of poetry lends a charm to our spirits, and serves to soothe us into oblivion of many sorrows.

If, indeed, Mr. Middleton should be so unfortunate as to find a few critics inimical to him, he must, imitating the example of his predecessor, Byron, bear up manfully against them. The same energy which assists him in moulding the music of his soul into verse, and fashioning those poetic whisperings of his fancy into form, must teach him to stand unshaken against the shafts aimed at him by the critic. He must remember that he is yet young, that the time for the full development of his genius is not yet arrived. As there must be a beginning in everything, so must there be in poetry. The volume before us, full as it is of beautiful imagery and sweet touches, is not the best thing Mr. Middleton will produce. He has a life before him, and his gifted spirit will teach him how to employ it. Let him subdue those anxious and corroding fears which act as a blight to his imagination, and suffer his soul to unshackle itself entirely from its trammels. There are thousands who will appreciate his productions, thousands whose hearts will be warmed by the lessons of love which he inculcates. We shall be delighted to learn that Mr. Middleton's object has been gained, and that he has obtained some position which, by releasing him from his present too arduous labours, may, while it elevates him in the social scale, leave him abundance of time to pursue at intervals those studies in which he is by nature peculiarly fitted to shine. “The Poet's Vision” is a

very fine piece, full of the finest imagery and the deepest feeling. We cannot extract part without spoiling the piece; but as the volume is within the reach of every one, we recommend it to our readers, assured that they will find in the poems of Mr. Middleton a depth of soul and profundity of thought which a much abler man might with reason envy. Many other shorter poems in the volume are exquisitely beautiful.

BORNEO AND THE INDIAN ARCHIPELAGO. With Drawings of Costume and Scenery. By Frank Marryatt. Longman.

The present work is one which will doubtless meet with the success it deserves. Its author lays claim to no profound knowledge of the politics of insular Asia, no deep research into its history. The book is simply a narrative, written in a dashing and vigorous style, of amusing and novel adventures met with during the cruise of her Majesty's ship *Samarang* in those seas, and embodies at the same time much interesting and often original information. The ground gone over is immense, as the author carries us from Portsmouth harbour to the Cape; from thence to Singapore and on to Borneo, where we are presented with a detailed account of Mr. Brooke's new settlement; after which we accompany an expedition up the Sarawak river and across a large portion of that province. Many characteristic traits of Bornean manners are here described. Mr. Marryatt, being young and fond of adventure, mixed freely with the natives, and observed many new features in their customs and mode of living, collecting by the way much valuable information concerning the produce of the country. His affable and good-natured manners gained him much pleasant attention during his stay in the settlement, which was prolonged on account of an accident which happened to the *Samarang*, which vessel, unfortunately running on the rocks, sank, and it required the utmost exertion to get her up again. Mr. Brooke entertained the whole crew at his own dwelling. From Sarawak our traveller proceeded to Borneo Proper; after which we find him running through the Sulu group, sailing along the coast of China—at Pootor; then at Ningpo, at Quelpoort's Island, beating off the shores of Japan, and then threading the intricate channels of the Philippine islands.

Near Gillolo a most spirited and exciting conflict took place between one of the *Samarang's* boats and a large number of pirate prahus, in which desperate havoc was made among the crews of the latter vessels. Some little discussion was made as to which was the aggressive party, and we must say it bore the appearance of a somewhat equivocal proceeding.

Variety forms one of the most prominent characteristics of the present work. Events on events follow each other in rapid succession, related in a dashing and vigorous language, bearing testimony to the ability, acuteness, and intelligence of our young author. We shall say nothing of Mr. Marryatt's unfortunate misunderstanding with Sir Edward Belcher; perhaps a little more forbearance and equilibrium of temper would have prevented matters from resulting in so disagreeable an issue. However, we may remark that we are sorry her Majesty's navy has lost the service of Mr. Frank Marryatt, whose volume is by no means the least interesting of the numerous works on Borneo and the Indian Archipelago generally which have recently appeared before the public. It will be read with interest by many; while the beautiful plates with which it is profusely embellished add much to the value of the book. Seldom have more highly finished drawings come under our notice. If Mr. Frank Marryatt be as skilful in all other respects as he is in the use of the pencil and the pen, we may fearlessly predict a brilliant career for him.

POEMS. By W. C. Bennet.

The productions of this writer are full of nature, and contain some exquisite touches. Those which appeal to the sympathies of the world in general, those based upon the political events which have been lately passing around us, are, though bold and stirring, not by any means so much to our taste as those short pieces, which reveal, as it were, the whole up-wellings of a father's love to his child. They are inspired by his affection, and have the stamp of reality affixed to them. The first piece, entitled "*Baby May*," reveals his pride and delight in the little being which constituted his treasure upon earth, and around whom all the tenderest feelings of his nature expand. We know not if we be right, but it seems to us as though in the second piece, a sort of indistinct foreboding of evil is shadowed forth; and in the third surpassing all the others in beauty, the father seems to allude to the loss he has sustained. In this volume Mr. Bennet has fully established for himself the true character of a true poet; and we hope ere long to have another opportunity to review more of his productions.